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THE CARRIS-FORD TABLETS BY JOHN WILSON

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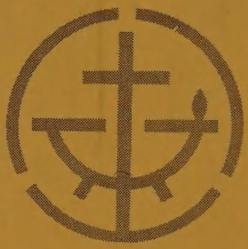

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THE

CARRISFORD TABLETS:

DISCOVERED ON ENGLISH SOIL BY H. PENNANT, LL.D., AND F. P. WYNDHURST, ESQ., AND RECORDING THE VOYAGES AND ADVENTURES OF SIMRAN THE BABYLONIAN, SPECIALLY ON HIS MISSION OF SEARCH TO THE TIN MINES OF ALBION, B.C. 1325-50.

BY

Rev. JOHN WILSON, M.A.

Author of 'Ænigma Vitæ,' etc.

– a Tale. –

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INTRODUCTION.

SQUIRE WYNDHURST'S NARRATIVE.

EVEN in these days of marvellous archæological discovery, when so many buried secrets of the past are being yielded up to the spade and pickaxe of the excavator, the idea of finding Babylonian cuneiform tablets on English soil may sound sufficiently startling. Yet only a century ago it fell as little within the reckoning of Orientalists that royal libraries would be disinterred from desert mounds on which for many centuries the wild Arab had pitched his tent, and that the annals of forgotten empires and the details of the everyday life of their peoples would be brought to light.

A few months ago, when I invited my friend Pennant to spend a few weeks with me at Carrisford, neither of us dreamt that his visit would be signalized by such a result as the find of the Carrisford tablets. The Professor had completed and put into the hands of the printer the manuscript of his work on the 'Origin of Early Civilization.' He had been much in need of mental repose, and for the time had

abjured the company of books. But the ruling passion was still strong in him, and he was seeing fancied inscriptions on every old wall and pavement; and to this fact of his trained eye being ever on the outlook, by unconscious cerebration, for cuneiform and other inscriptions, we owe the singular discovery now to be described.

I must, at the outset, confess to having a hobby—a craze some of my friends more bluntly style it—in the line of archæological research: even in boyhood I was distinguished by my zeal for the collection of old knick-knacks. At a comparatively early age I was caught by the spell of Oriental exploration, and I have since accumulated a collection which has made Carrisford a well-known name in archæology.

My first introduction to Professor Pennant and Assyriology dates back a good many years. I was an active young fellow in those days, and was doing the Eastern tour in company of my old college chum, Captain Rickarby. We had gone through Egypt and Palestine, and had crossed the Syrian desert by the ancient trade and war route between the Orontes and the Euphrates. On the banks of the latter stream we had struck the trail of Pennant, who even at that time was known to fame as an enthusiastic explorer. We had the good fortune to be able to pull him out of a rather ugly scrape with a rascally Arab sheikh, who had laid an embargo upon certain exhumed treasures, for which he was demanding an exorbitant ransom. After this, as our intended route coincided with that of Pennant, the two parties

travelled together; and as Rickarby's furlough was shortly to expire, and he had to return home, I resolved to remain and tack on my armed escort to Pennant's party, and assist in some further explorations he intended to make. Our partnership in this business lasted over a year, and the British Museum has profited by it to a considerable extent; and from this time I date the commencement of my interest in Eastern discovery.

On the third morning after his arrival at Carrisford, the Professor had come into the breakfast-room fresh and ruddy from his early walk. His favourite route was a private path leading through the grounds past a mound partly covered by underwood, and surmounted by the ruined chapel of St. Asaph, where some of the early barons of Carrisford lie interred.

'Have you ever done any exploration in your own district, Wyndhurst?' asked my guest, as the family party were seated at the breakfast-table.

'Never,' I replied, in surprise. 'You don't suppose there's anything in your line in this part of the world, eh?'

'Who knows?' said Pennant. 'I believe there's a good deal of buried history in every district of the country if we only knew where to find it, and how to read it when found.'

'I should appear still more crazy than I do in the estimation of my good neighbours,' said I, 'if I took to pottering and excavating every old mound and mole-hill in the neighbourhood.'

'The average English Philistine,' said Pennant,

riding off on one of his favourite hobbies, 'has about as little idea of the value of the buried records of antiquity as the average Bedouin of the desert—less, perhaps, for the Arab is at least waking up to a sense of their money value. Your Philistine knows nothing of the task of the archæologist as the laborious pioneer of history. He is little aware how deeply our modern civilization is rooted in the past, or how much the true archæologist must possess of something akin to creative genius. For why do we prize the relics of the past? It is because these are flotsam brought down by the same current which has borne ourselves down from the prehistoric ages; and it is because we strive through them to attain a true and vivid idea of the world of living men and women in those dim centuries when human passions were as intense and the struggle for existence was as real as it now is, and far more tragic.'

'I was asking,' said I, interrupting this prelection, 'if you thought there was anything in your special line hereabouts. You were speaking as if you thought it a matter of course that a Tel el-Amarna was awaiting excavation at the distance of a few stone-casts.'

'Well, who knows?' said he mysteriously. 'I dare say the Phœnicians must often have passed this way to and from the tin-mining Duchy.'

'I suspect those old traders and buccaneers of antiquity were always too intent upon securing a lucrative cargo, to waste time in carving inscriptions in order to indulge the curiosity of the remote

descendants of the barbarians with whom they traded, and whom they fleeced.'

'Ah! if they had only taken the time! Had they only left, in exchange for all the shiploads of tin they carried off, a Tel el-Amarna which would furnish full and authentic information about our own ancestry three or four millenniums ago, I confess I would barter the Egyptian one for it twice over. Whilst so much daylight has been cast upon the everyday life of ancient Egypt and Babylonia, our own primitive European ancestors are almost as shadowy to us as the ghosts that linger about their chambered tumuli and cromlechs, though, no doubt, the discovery of the lake-dwellings has taught us much about their mode of life. An inscription in the language of any European people of the age of Moses, as long as the Isdubar epic, or the Dusratta Hittite letter, would be beyond price. Pity our Northern ancestors were so late in evolving for themselves, or borrowing from their contemporaries, the art of writing, and that, compared with the daylight that has been cast on the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians, we are in such darkness in regard to the early European races. What, for example, was the origin of the European bronze civilization, and the small-handled swords; of Etruscan art; of the chambered tumuli of Denmark, Ireland and Brittany? In what year and by whom was Stonehenge erected; what was the first Aryan race who invaded Britain, and whence did they come; what race occupied the Swiss lake-dwellings, or the *terre-mari* of the Po Valley, in the ages of polished stone and of bronze?

It is hardly to be hoped that any future discoveries will throw much light on such questions as these. But, in the absence of ancient Aryan inscriptions, it would be a wonderful thing if one could find Babylonian tablets of genuine antiquity in English soil.'

'Very wonderful,' I replied dryly, answering him, as I believed, according to his folly. 'Perhaps some Babylonian mound may have been transported to Carrisford, as they say the angels conveyed St. Asaph's chapel from Palestine.'

'Ha! who says so?' asked Pennant eagerly.

'Maundering tradition merely,' said I curtly, for I felt I had had quite enough of this fooling.

'Tell me,' said Pennant, more seriously, 'are Chaldean tablets so cheap and plentiful with you here that you are using them as road-metal?'

'What do you mean?' I exclaimed, more mystified than ever.

For answer, the Professor produced from his pocket a piece of terra-cotta, identical, so far as appearance went, with the inscribed tablets of ancient Chaldea. Taking it up and examining it, I found that it undoubtedly bore cuneiform characters, which, so far as I could decipher them at the moment, appeared to read . . . . . *son of Ubal.* I looked over to Pennant for an explanation.

'Picked it up,' said he, in reply to my mute question, 'not five hundred yards from where you sit: you must have dropped it out of your pocket, I suppose.'

'I could hardly have done that,' I answered,

'since I never possessed a tablet of that kind. Where exactly did you find it?'

'Close to the path leading towards the Wandle bridge.'

It was my turn to be interested. Cuneiform inscriptions in the soil of Carrisford! the idea was too absurd to be entertained for a moment. Some curious accident must have brought that ancient brick to the neighbourhood, provided this was not merely a paltry trick the Professor was playing upon me, though, from his manner, such did not appear to be the case; indeed, Pennant was hardly the man to play practical jokes at any time.

After breakfast we sallied forth to visit and inspect the spot at which the article had been found. Carrisford, I may explain, is situated at the edge of an incline which dips down abruptly into the valley of the Wandle. Here and there the sides of the valley rise abruptly in gravelly bluffs; and at one point behind Carrisford House a deep hollow has been cloven in the clay soil by a small stream, the Leet, a tributary of the Wandle. A winding path led us downwards till we reached the bank of the smaller stream, close by which rose the mound surmounted by the shell of the ruined chapel. Beyond this, in the direction of Wandle Bridge, is a brickfield, where the fine clay of the neighbourhood is utilized for building purposes.

The path we had taken led along the lower side of this mound, and between it and the bank of the brook. An old copse-wood, which clothed part of the mound, had at one point been recently cleared

away, and the remains of a wall had been laid bare. It was here, as Pennant pointed out to me, that he had picked up the fragment of inscribed brick which had evidently fallen out of the crumbling wall.

'It was not last year nor last century your brick was put into that wall,' I remarked.

'How do you know that?' asked Pennant.

'I have had some alterations made here lately,' said I, 'in course of which the wall was laid bare, and the soil overlying it bore all the appearance of having been undisturbed for centuries.'

'Do you know anything of the origin of the chapel?'

'It was built by an ancient baron, Bevis de Carrisforde, on his return from the Crusades: so say authentic records, though local tradition declares that it was carried bodily from the Holy Land in the way I mentioned.'

'And tradition, as usual, has been founded on a modicum of fact which it has distorted,' said Pennant quickly. 'The old Crusader must have brought some soil from the Holy Land back with him, and spread it there for the foundation of the chapel. The brick must have been imported with the soil—there's the explanation.'

This supposition of cuneiform tablets in Palestinian soil, which would, till recently, have appeared inadmissible, certainly seemed to us both the most plausible explanation of the discovery of the brick.

'At any rate,' said I, 'we had better have the mystery thoroughly investigated. I have long had an eye upon this mound, but was a little afraid of

excavating it, for fear of imperilling the foundations of the old chapel. To-morrow morning, however, I'll have a party of labourers set to work at the spot, and we can direct them so as to preserve the ruin intact.'

It was with some impatience I awaited the commencement of operations on the mound. Next morning the spot was the scene of great activity. Workmen with spades, pickaxes and barrows were engaged trenching the mound in different directions, whilst Pennant and I superintended their labour and directed their efforts. Nothing of importance, however, was that day found, with the exception of a curious old baptismal font, and the mutilated stone effigy of a feudal knight, probably Sir Bevis de Carrisforde himself. There was nothing, however, either Babylonian or Oriental to be found. Next day I directed the workmen to go still deeper, and it was then we detected traces of something more ancient than the mediæval chapel. The latter had been built upon an ancient British barrow or funeral mound of the Bronze Period, and Thurnam's well-known dictum, '*Round barrows, round skulls*' was borne out by the discovery of a brachycephalic skeleton, with remains of a bronze collar round the neck, and the customary urn by its side.

Here, however, our discoveries appeared to come to an end, and for some days the mystery of the Babylonian brick remained as impenetrable as ever. I finally gave up the problem, though Pennant, who was frequently absorbed in thought, was evidently puzzling over it still.

One afternoon, he came to me in a state of excitement, and announced that he had made an important discovery bearing on the matter in question.

'It was stupid of me,' said he, 'not to have thought of making the experiment before. I have proved that the clay tablet was manufactured in this very district, and if you can certify that the old wall beside which I picked it up has been covered up for centuries, we have here a very curious archæological puzzle.'

'The mystery deepens,' I replied. 'How can you prove that the brick was manufactured in this district?'

'As I was this morning passing the neighbouring brickfield,' said he, 'it occurred to me that our tablet might be microscopically examined, and compared with one of the ordinary bricks of the neighbourhood. I picked up a piece of the latter, and carried it back with me; then I proceeded to grind down a portion of each in the way practised by geologists, and examined them with a microscope. You can have an opportunity of testing the result. The mineral and chemical composition of each is identical, and even what traces of organisms are found in the one are, to some extent, found in the other. The local origin of the material of the brick being beyond question, the problem which now confronts us is as to when and by whom it has been inscribed with ancient Babylonian characters. It bears all the marks of high antiquity; but it is tantalizing that there is so little of it, and that the

inscription has been so weatherworn and defaced that only a word or two is legible.'

Our curiosity having thus received fresh stimulus, we proceeded to the scene of our recent excavations, and subjected it to a more thorough inspection. The chapel-mound had by this time been honeycombed with shafts and trenches in various directions without much result. The old wall had even been pulled down, and all its stones examined carefully. It then occurred to me to have a shaft sunk under the foundation of the wall. In doing so, the workmen were soon arrested by reaching the solid rock, the face of which we laid bare to a considerable extent. It was Pennant's practised eye that first detected, at one place, the appearance of something like rude masonry breaking in upon the continuity of the natural rock, and covering an irregular space of about ten feet square. Some of the stones were almost cyclopean in size, and at one point we discovered a gap, filled with mud which had evidently oozed in from above. This having been cleared away, we discovered the entrance of what appeared to be a cave, though it was some time ere the mud, which had percolated through the opening and partially silted up the cave, could be removed.

I may say here, by way of parenthesis, that we afterwards found clear indications that this cavern had once been the dwelling of palæolithic man, whose weapons of chipped flint lay side by side with bones of the mammoth, rhinoceros, hyæna, and other animals. The rude building at the

entrance of the cavern, however, belonged to a later period, though doubtless it was older than the funeral barrow of the Bronze Age which had been erected above.

The discovery of the cave had imparted a new spirit of hope, and even of excitement, to masters and workmen alike. Pennant and I were in the thick of the work, and were liberally bedaubed with mud and clay. We knew too well by experience the necessity of cautious treatment of the soil, lest any fragile skeleton or implement should be irremediably spoilt, to leave the men to themselves at this interesting point. I had crawled on hands and knees into the chamber, and, by the aid of a lighted lamp, I investigated the place above and below. It was inconsiderable in size, being not more than twelve feet in length, ten in breadth, and seven at greatest height. At one side there was a recess which had evidently been used as a fireplace, since there was an artificial exit for the smoke at a corner of the roof above. There were also remains of a chimney, constructed of baked clay in a style that seemed unique among all the prehistoric cave-dwellings I have seen. By this time Pennant had joined me, and, while examining the artificial flue, an excited exclamation escaped him, such as I had heard from him before in some of our Babylonian excavations. It reminded me of the first sharp cry of a fox-hound when he has fairly got upon the scent. His quick eye had noted something upon the terra-cotta jamb, and speedily he had cleared away the dust of centuries from the spot. Then, after cleaning and

adjusting his glasses, he held up his lamp within an inch or two of the wall, and was inspecting it with the eagerness of a setter who has just spotted game. After a few minutes he stepped back, and, pointing significantly to some characters inscribed on the clay, motioned me to read. Plainly these were Babylonian cuneiforms, which, with a little help from Pennant, I read as follows:

> 'Simran, the son of Ubal of Ur,
> to beguile the tedium of his prison,
> has inscribed the tablets that lie beneath;'

and a little lower down:

> 'May the gods Ea and Marduk
> pity my sad fate and send help.'

At this point a messenger arrived to call us to luncheon; but we were too much excited and engrossed with the wonderful discovery that was dawning upon us to pay any heed to the summons. The inscription on the chimney indicated that there was probably more to be found under our feet, and accordingly we began cautiously to break ground in the floor of the cavern. Having carefully cleared away the hardened mud which had oozed in at the entrance of the cave, we reached and laid bare its genuine floor, which was composed first of all of a surface deposit of black mould, consisting principally of decayed vegetable matter. Under this we found a layer of hardened clay an inch or two in thickness, wherein were one or two marks of a human foot, which had evidently been shod with some sort of sandal. This layer did not extend over the whole floor of the cavern, but only covered

part of one side. On removing a small portion of this, we found underneath it a thin layer of dry vegetable matter, half an inch or so in thickness, which, when cleared away, revealed to our astonished gaze, as we peered eagerly down in the flickering lamplight, row upon row of brick tablets in beautiful preservation, and inscribed with cuneiform characters. Their number was exactly 120; and, thanks to the care with which they were taken up and handled, they were all safely conveyed, in the course of that afternoon, to Carrisford House, where they were carefully arranged on a shelf of my museum.

The work of decipherment and translation has been successfully accomplished by Professor Pennant and myself, and the first-fruits of that labour are hereby presented to the public. We make no comments upon the importance and interest of the contents of the tablets; but, in regard to the form in which they are here presented to the public, it must be explained that, in view of the more accurate and scholarly version to be shortly undertaken by Professor Pennant, the present work is a somewhat free translation intended for the general public. Many of the proper names have been modernized so as to render them intelligible to the ordinary reader; nor is absolute uniformity of spelling aimed at, for it has been deemed best occasionally to give the proper name as it stands in the original, and afterwards to employ that form of the name which is more familiar to the modern reader.

A few notes have been subjoined in an appendix as examples of the manifold correspondences that

exist between the details of Simran's narrative and those already ascertained from recent Oriental discovery, or from Aryan archæology and philology. These might have been multiplied indefinitely; but readers who have a competent knowledge of the subject will be able to make such comparisons for themselves.

One peculiarity of the tablets must be specially noted. Simran's narrative, it will be seen, is at times interrupted by the insertion of a journal of the state of the weather, or of events that occurred on the day of writing. These have been given as they stand, and will be found to form a sort of undercurrent leading forward to and finally merging in the main stream of Simran's history, which is contained in the chapters that follow.

THE CARRISFORD TABLETS

STORY OF SIMRAN

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE IN BABYLONIA.

SIMRAN, the son of Ubal, the Chaldean, the servant of the mighty King Merodach-Baladan* of Babylon, inscribes these tablets to relieve the tedium of his prison. I am Simran, the exile, the man who has traversed many lands and seas and has been buffeted as a plaything between good and evil fortune beyond all men of his time.

I have stood ere this in the hall of princes and held converse with great kings; now I sigh in a dungeon with a swine-herd for my keeper. I have sailed in ships of the dusky Sumerians, the crafty Phœnicians, and the fierce Pelasgians; now I am confined like a caged sea-bird in a narrow cell. I have been happy in my native Sumir, favoured of Samas the sun-god, and in Edinnah, the garden of

* See Appendix, Note A.

God; now I shiver in this sunless land at the world's end.

Thus far I came on a mission entrusted to me by King Merodach-Baladan to discover the tin mines of Kasdur,* in this western island of Albion. May the malediction of the great gods Anu, Bel and Ea, who inhabit the three mansions of the celestial vault, rest upon Malgon, chief of the Tamanu, who betrayed me hither and imprisoned me till my friend Ariac should return with a ransom from his native country of Alpia.

Immured in this cell and deprived of fuel and palatable food, whilst the terrible northern winter is setting in, I would sink into despair did I not remember that, having been born under the star Nin-si, the astrologers predicted for me a complete life, and said I would not be cut off in mid-time of my days. I therefore seek to fortify my spirit against the demons of despair, and hunger and frost by my country's incantations. I will hopefully wait the return of Ariac and the coming of the ships of Yakin, who set out to discover the sea-passage to Albion by way of Gadir and the pillars of Bel; but, as a whole year has passed since I parted from him, I begin to fear that some evil has befallen him.

In my days and nights of solitude my mind's eye reviews the varied and strange events of my past, as when one gliding down the current of the Euphrates on a skin-bark, views the banks with their cities and temples, mounds and deserts,

* See Appendix, Note B.

moving past; and, to ward off the demons that haunt the idle, I inscribe on these clay tablets the story of my life. Haply, in ages hence, someone may read the story of my wanderings; for an ancient saying is current in the East that Bel, after founding Babel, passed westward to Phœnicia, and ever since has been vanishing further west, carrying the knowledge and wisdom of the East to the most distant shores; and the time may come when a knowledge of letters may arrive even at this benighted land, and men of a future age may dig up and read these inscribed tablets.

I was born within sound of the great sea, and that is perhaps why I have been all my life of a roving adventurous spirit. My father, Ubal, who was a keeper of one of the royal parks, was often absent from home, and my mother had gone to live for a time among her kinsfolk in Marratu by the Chaldean Sea. I therefore first saw the light in that region where Merodach, the son of Ea, is said to have risen from the abyss to teach knowledge and letters to the sons of men.

My earliest memory goes back to a morning when, in company of my nurse Nanna and my elder sister, I was running on a sandy shore picking up sea-shells, and I first took note of what seemed to me to be winged monsters moving on the surface of the sea. I asked my nurse what they were, and when she replied that those were ships of Sindhu and Abhira (India and Ophir), I regarded them with a wistful wonder as if they had been messengers

to this earth from the mysterious realm of Aralu.

When I was five years old my father, who was of the lineage of Shem, whilst my mother, Azaga, was of the ancient stock of Accad, became a controller of taxes in the city of Ur, where I had my home throughout most of the period of my boyhood.

Ur was at that time, as now, the great emporium of Babylon for the merchandise of southern countries, and a gathering-place of merchants and seamen of many lands. It was my delight in childhood to stand on a mound at the foot of our garden and watch the ships as they passed up and down the river. I wondered at the strange speech and appearance of the sailors, some of whom were more dusky of face than the dark-skinned sons of Sumir. I used to listen eagerly to stories about foreign lands, and I would ply my nurse, as well as my mother, with many questions concerning the people and cities of distant countries.

I learned very early to know certain of the characters of the speech of Sumir, being first taught by my father to read the inscribed bricks with which he had lined the family hearth. These contained the names and representations of Isdubar and of the hunter *Z*aidu; of Urubel, the Elysian ferryman; of Hasisadra and the ark, and of the battle of Bel-Merodach with the dragon.

My uncle Amilsin, a priest of the temple of the moon-god at Ur, seeing my eagerness for knowledge, gave me on my fifth birthday some beautiful tablets

containing easy fables, such as that of the ox and horse, the fox, the eagle, and the serpent. Amilsin was anxious that I should be trained for his own profession; but my father, who was no admirer of the priesthood, declared that he would rather I became one of the humblest irrigators who watch the water-sluices.

I was sent to a school taught by a prophet (asip) named Atluma, who marked the soles of my feet with his seal. From him I learned to read and write, also to translate from the Accadian speech, which is the learned and sacred language of Babylonia. Above all branches of instruction I delighted in the study of geography and what pertained to distant lands and peoples, and I used to picture in imagination the foreign countries of which I read, and to wonder if I should ever be able to visit them. Often in times of leisure I would sit in the garden brooding over these things and framing tales of adventure of which I was ever myself the Isdubar and hero.

I derived my disposition partly from my father, who was a man of strong, reticent character, yet active and enterprising, and partly from my mother, who was of a more sensitive and affectionate nature. I was bold among my associates, and fond of active games; yet would I delight in sitting wrapt in thought for hours over some book, and my imagination would be specially enthralled by all I could learn of the realm of Aralu and the future life. Sometimes, when a death took place among our acquaintance, and I would hear the wailing of mourners as

they accompanied the bier to the funeral-pyre and the tomb, I would be profoundly troubled by the thought of dying. To be snatched away from the daylight and carried to the land of no return, there to live a life which is half death; to be but an empty form, which all winds blow through; to be tortured by Allat and the implacable demons, the Anunaki; to have no more genial converse with friends; but to be only able to gasp out some wheezy mockery of speech; to hover, like night-birds, in eternal dimness, with only a faint chance of escape to the mountain of heaven, and the feast of the gods—that was a prospect which ofttimes horrified me. I recollect one vivid dream of my childhood in which I fancied I had gone through all the process of dying, and was ushered amid the dread realities of the under-world, and I awoke trembling, and wet with moisture from very fear; and, when I went to my mother's chamber to unbosom my terror, she could only kiss me and teach me a prayer to Merodach, and tell me to sleep again.

I never saw a mountain in my early years, and I wondered what it was like. I knew that the great river rose in a northern mountain-range, and one of my boyish dreams was to become a traveller, and find out the heavenly mountain Rowandiz, and lead thither my father and mother and little sister ere they should die and pass for ever into the dark abode of relentless Allat.

My favourite holiday occupation was to go with some companions to a disused brickfield, with a

large watercourse running near it, and there lay out a plan of the world by leading water from the stream in two winding lines, which we called the Burat and Diklat (the Euphrates and Tigris), placing on their banks little models of cities representing Nineveh, Carchemish, Babylon, Ur, Eridu, and other cities, and drawing cross-lines to represent the great intersecting canals, such as the Ar-Malcha and the Nahr-Kutha. We made also pools, which we called by the names of the two great lakes and the Chaldean Sea, and on these we floated our palm-leaf barges.

At the age of fourteen I was taken by my father to the town of Borsippa, near Babylon, to study at the college of the great temple of E-Zida. My father having business in Babylon, took me thither for two days. I can never forget my first view of the city: the great quay of brick and bitumen by which we approached it from the river, and the crowds of people walking thereon in the light of the setting sun; the lofty walls and palaces of the city; the gardens and canals; and the royal army, which was manœuvring on a plain near the river.

At Borsippa I resided in the house of a sister of my father, in the neighbourhood of the temple. I went daily to the College of Celibates, situated on the western side of the great court of the temple, beside the library buildings. This famous temple of E-Zida is dedicated to Bel-Merodach, who henceforth became the chief deity of my adoration. Daily we saw the priests engaged in their ministrations, after washing in the purificatory laver before going

in to offer sacrifice; daily we could hear the echo of their voices performing their liturgical chants, and we who were scholars were obliged frequently to attend the temple-worship, as upon the Sabbath days and the great festivals, especially at the festival of first-fruits at the beginning of the year, when the high priest passed through the dividing-curtain into the holy of holies on that great day, when Bel-Merodach, lord of the heavens, seats himself in the inner shrine of his temple, and the powers of heaven and earth listen to him in fear, and stand bowing down before him.

For a time after my first separation from home, and the society of the dear ones I had left behind, I was very home-sick, and my mind took a gloomy tinge. My early fears of death and the dark realm of Aralu revived, and my thoughts turned towards the priestly life as the most likely to ensure me against the woes of the future state. For a time my mode of life became very devout and ascetic, and my highest ambition was that I might be deemed worthy of one day standing in the presence of Bel, and of entering the most holy place, where stand the sacred ark and altar, to present the offerings of my people on the golden table in front of the image of Merodach. But by-and-by I found that I was as one who endeavours to lead a great volume of water in a too confined channel, the banks of which are infallibly broken sooner or later, and the waters overflow and escape.

Day by day I was occupied with the language and learning of the ancient Accadians, and with trans-

lating them into our modern speech. I acquired also a little Egyptian, as well as Aramaic, which is useful to people engaged in commerce. I here made a beginning of the study of astrology, and in my last year at Borsippa I was permitted with my comrades sometimes to ascend the temple tower and take observations of the heavens.

This tower or ziggurat of the temple of Bel is one of the wonders of the world for its height and beauty. It is built in seven great stories, representing the seven nibiri or planets. The first is coloured white; the second black; the third, fourth, and fifth, red, blue, and orange respectively; the sixth, silver, and the seventh golden. Here I learned to know the chief constellations as a shepherd his sheep, which are scattered on the Plain of Dura, and oftentimes I would look down on Babylon with its great buildings and its streets whereon the people streamed to and fro like ants. I would scan the great river with its barges, and the broad level plain with its wheat-fields intersected by a network of canals. But as mine eyes turned wistfully to north, south, east, and west, my restless spirit would yearn to overpass the limits of the horizon and go forth to explore new lands. Sometimes I felt a mighty inward stirring, as when the young plant in spring-time bursts the narrow confines of its seed-casket, and I had a presentiment that I would not spend my days always in Babylonia, but would one day behold very different scenes. It was a favourite holiday occupation with me to wander along some new water-course and explore it backwards further

and further till I found its source in some lake or great reservoir. Thus early did my spirit begin to exhibit a hatred of restraint, and aspired to dare and to do things which others accounted nothing better than madness. This feature of my character I perhaps inherited from my father, of whom I have been told that, being in his early years in the host of the Tartan of King Kuri-Galzu, he on one occasion saved the army from a position of peril by leading a successful night-assault on the camp of the enemy.

In my last year at the college of Borsippa I was often set, with a few of my more advanced comrades, to copying the historical books in the temple library, the keeper of which at that time was Nazi-Marduk, the uncle of King Mili-Sigu.* On one occasion an event happened which I may record as being memorable in connection with my future life. The royal chariot had driven up to the gateway of the temple, and the king himself and the Rabshakeh, and the heir-apparent, Merodach-Baladan, a youth of about my own age, were ushered into the library-building on a private and unexpected visit to Nazi-Marduk. It appeared that they had had some discussion in the royal palace and had come to the library to consult certain books on the question under debate. As there chanced to be no other attendant at hand at the moment, Nazi-Marduk, on consulting a catalogue, directed me to proceed to a particular chamber, and from a certain shelf fetch two books bearing a special number. Three

* See Appendix, Note C.

times I was sent on this errand, and I afterwards withdrew to another room to continue my copying; but I had overheard fragments of their conversation, which bore upon the growing scarcity of bronze weapons and agricultural implements, because the early sources whence tin was drawn from the remote north and east had well-nigh dried up, and it was now very difficult to obtain the tin of Tarshish through the Sidonians, who had been forced by the Assyrian and Hittite monarchs to make a treaty guaranteeing to them a monopoly of the tin trade. Mili-Sigu had consulted his wise men regarding the various tin-producing regions accessible to Babylonia, and he had come personally to consult certain books on the subject. Little did I then dream what weighty bearing this question would yet have upon my own destiny.

In my last year at Borsippa an event occurred whereby for a time the whole firmament of my life was darkened—my mother was taken from us by a sudden death. For a time the unseen world, with its unknown terrors, loomed very near, and the one great question of life appeared to be how best to ensure one's self against the woes of the future state. I begged my father to allow me to enter upon the regular course of training for the priesthood either at Eridu or at Nipur. On the day after my mother's interment I had much earnest converse with my father, who manifested deep disappointment when I mentioned my inclination towards the priestly life. I knew that he bore little goodwill to that profession, having even been branded as an atheist

by some of his neighbours because he rarely frequented the temples.

My father said he had no wish to force any life-long yoke upon my shoulders without the consent of my heart, yet it was right I should be well aware of what I was doing if I entered upon a priestly life. I was as yet too young, he said, to know all the mysteries of iniquity, of which the national religion had become the nursery and the cloak; for, even in its most august form, the worship of Bel-Merodach, there was a leaven of licentiousness to which the chambers of one of the temple towers was devoted.* For himself he knew little with certainty of the things of the unseen world; but to him it appeared that there should be no divorce between morality and religion, and that gods who encouraged or winked at what conscience condemned were not to be venerated. He rarely found peace of mind whilst taking part in the rites of the national religion, from the thought that some more august Divinity, or some unseen irresistible Power, might be frowning in wrath upon many things with which that religion was mixed. He deplored the spread of the pleasure-groves, consecrated to the worship of Mylitta, into which the earlier and more venerable worship of Istar was degenerating. Not only was the honour of our women degraded thereby, but the ancient martial spirit of the sons of Shem, who had settled among the softer and more luxurious Accadians, was thereby being impaired. He was afraid the Assyrians,

* See Appendix, Note D.

with their rude Northern vigour, would erelong overwhelm the degenerate Babylonians, and take possession of the country. He thought it strange that in the region where Ea was said to have kindled the lamp of learning, and taught humane arts to men, moral darkness and corruption should be rayed forth to the surrounding nations alongside of that light. Even by their migration to Akharri (Phœnicia) the Babylonians had transplanted thither, in still more corrupt form, the debased worship of Istar.

My father counselled me rather to go for a year or two to the ancient seat of learning at the island of Dilmon, in the Chaldean Sea. There my time would not be lost, and I would have the opportunity of weighing more carefully the matter of choosing a profession. He then went and opened a coffer, from which he took a small clay tablet—an heirloom from his forefathers—and showed me these lines inscribed upon it:

> 'One is supreme, eternal, resistless:
> He is the Just One who establisheth laws;
> He ordained from of old the pathway of the stars;
> He swerveth not from the right in judgment.
> All other gods beside Him are vanity:
> Seek Him and ye shall find life;
> He is gracious; a friend that faileth not.'

I gazed with awe upon this strange relic of the past, which seemed a talisman with which the family destiny was closely connected. I eagerly questioned my father regarding the history and import of this strange document, but he had little information to give on the subject. His own father

had died when he, Ubal, was still an infant, and all that his mother could tell him was that our first ancestor who settled in Sumir was one Elnazir, who came from Harran in the days of King Kudur-Mabuk. This Elnazir had belonged to the sect of Abram Ben-Tera, who had been driven from Harran because he refused to follow the corrupt practices with which the worship of the national divinities had become associated.

My father looked wistfully upon the tablet, and said that he had often ardently desired to discover the name of this supreme divinity, and to learn whether any still living upon earth knew and worshipped him; but his busy life had not afforded him time or opportunity to prosecute the search. He hoped, however, that I might learn at Dilmon something that might cast light on this matter; but he straitly enjoined upon me to exercise caution in making inquiry upon the subject.

Ever memorable to me is the day when I left the home of my childhood to go down the river by boat to Dilmon. It was then I looked for the last time on the face of my father, whose parting benediction: 'May the Most High be gracious to thee, my son!'—had the more weight and solemnity for me because he so seldom thus unlocked the inner chamber of his heart. He was a just man above all I have known; and the sigh of my heart has often been after One enthroned in supreme power, who should combine the character of my upright father with that of my tenderly affectionate mother.

CHAPTER II.

ESCAPE FROM DILMON.

ON my voyage to Dilmon there befell me an untoward event, which was an evil presage of what was to follow. The craft in which I had sailed, manned by an ill-mannered crew who spent great part of their time in eating and drinking, bartering, gambling and quarrelling, had not long passed out of the Great River into the Chaldean Sea when it ran aground upon a mudbank. All about us lay shallows and lagoons, surrounded with islets of black mud and forests of gigantic reeds and bulrushes. The crew made great uproar and clamour over the accident, but were incapable of righting the ship. Suddenly there swarmed out of secret coverts among the reeds a number of flat-bottomed boats whose savage owners had been attracted to the spot by the cries of our men. These were of the stealthy people called Gambulites, whose villages are hidden, like the nests of bitterns, among the reedy fens. When pursued they retreat into secret hiding-places among the reeds, where it is dangerous for other men to

follow them. Those boatmen indeed assisted in pushing our vessel off the bank, but they exacted a heavy payment for their services; for, ere we had done with them, they seized upon everything portable of any value which they found in the vessel. Consequently I arrived at Dilmon with only the garment which covered me, and I had to send for new supplies of necessary articles from home.

Few spots upon the surface of the earth are so venerable as this island of Dilmon, whose recorded history reaches back into the darkest ages of antiquity. It was there that Ea was said to have first arisen from the deep to teach religion and learning to mankind; it was there, in the night of antiquity, that the first light was kindled whose rays have spread knowledge and civilization into the surrounding world. There it was that commerce began to be actively prosecuted, and thence emigrant Cushites passed westward to Phœnicia to found colonies which were to rival their Chaldean parent in greatness and riches.

At Dilmon* I was more deeply grounded in the sciences of cosmogony, astrology and calculation. I learned the significance as well as the names of the stars, and was taught to reckon eclipses, and to trace the zodiacal pathway of the sun and moon in the heavens. I became more deeply versed in the history, learning and religion of the Accadians, and learned how all beings and all existence, visible and invisible, have emanated, first of all as formless matter, from Ilu, the supreme, the Hidden One,

* See Appendix, Note E.

who by His will and word separated the elements of chaos and gave life and government to the ordered universe.

At Dilmon I began to study the science of presages, of charms, and of exorcisms. I learned how to consult the stars and the sky in their influence on human destiny. But though I had aptitude for learning, and made rapid progress, the knowledge I acquired failed to satisfy my mind and heart. I wished to know the reason of many things, and would ask questions whereat my teachers were often angry, and sometimes they abated my food, or in other ways punished me. When I inquired how the stars have such influence on human affairs—as, for example, why thunder on the 27th day of Tammuz should necessarily prognosticate a good harvest; why the brilliancy of the star Jupiter on the 16th should always prognosticate a favourable battle; and, still more, why the birth of a deformed child showed that the year's produce in the land would be diminished; or why the entrance of a black dog into a temple or palace had aught to do with the future stability of that building—I was told that one ought not to question the wisdom of the ancients, but trustfully accept it.

At length the restraint of the schools began to weigh upon my mind like a heavy yoke on the shoulder of an unbroken steer. The restless spirit which has since led me to many lands was stirring within me. Oftentimes I stole down secretly to the shore to watch the passing ships; and when it was my turn to stand at night on the tower *ziggurat* and

note the movements of the heavenly bodies, mine eyes would be turned to the sea instead. The ocean, with its mystic moaning voice, seemed to be for ever calling me away; and the great world of which I caught a glimpse to east and west beyond the dim flat shore of the Chaldean Sea was beckoning me to a freer and grander life.

Once I chanced to let fall and break a precious tablet of the time of Sargon of Agadé, which was more than two thousand years old; and whilst I was troubled in spirit, and afraid to make known my carelessness, I was sent with Ittibel, servant to the prophet Aradea, in a boat for the purpose of getting some provision-bags of dates and flour which had been sent from Ur. I found that the ship was outward bound for Sindhu, and as the wind was favourable for sailing, and the mariners were impatient of the delay, I besought the captain to take me with him, whilst I sent back the servant in the boat. Some of the seamen murmured at my being taken on board, fearing the wrath of the gods worshipped by my masters at Dilmon; but as I was young and active, and the ship was short of a hand, the captain yielded to my entreaties.

This false step of my foolish youth, in thoughtlessly casting off the restraint of the schools, and, without seeking the consent of my father, or calculating its probable results, setting out on a long and uncertain voyage, was the source of many woes and bitter regret in years to come. It was the sixth day of the month Tasrit (September) when I went aboard, and at that time day and night were balanced. At first all went

well with us; but no sooner had we passed beyond the Chaldean Sea into the great sea of Sindhu, than the demon of the south-west wind, which brings disease, caused a plague to break out in the ship, and first one and then another of the crew perished. Then the seamen began loudly to demand that I should be cast into the sea to appease the wrath of the gods from whose priests I was a fugitive; but the captain, who was a just man, not wishing that I should perish, prepared for me a little raft, and placed on it a small vessel containing one *qa* of dates, and a flagon of water. As the wind blew in the direction of Chaldea, I had hope of being carried thither, and made a sail by hanging my garment upon a pole. But suddenly the wind veered round, and I was carried westward, and for three days and three nights I was tossed on the waves, and the star of the Wolf, that brings tempest, cast its baleful influence upon the deep. The nights, by reason of the darkness and the raging of the storm, were dreadful to me: I feared to see the huge scaly form of the great serpent rising from the abyss, and thrice seven times I prayed to my god Marduk for deliverance. On the third night, by the dim light of the stars, I espied the dark outline of an island, on whose low sandy shore I succeeded in safely landing.

I dimly groped my way inland till I reached a clump of trees, and, being in dread of wild beasts, I clambered up a tree, in whose branches I soon succumbed to fatigue and fell fast asleep. That night I dreamt a dream so strange and vivid that I could

not but believe it was something prophetic and divine. Methought I was dead, and that I had gone unpurified into the dread abode of Allat, where I was condemned to be fixed for ever to one of the vast pillars supporting the earth, and to be tormented by demons who jeered and hooted me. Sometimes, indeed, it seemed as if I was still on earth, but in a region of strange noises, and of whispering and muttering voices ; and anon I seemed to be hearing the moans of tormented spirits in the kingdom of Hades. Again and again this vision recurred, each time with greater vividness. The horror of that unnaturally cramped position, whilst for ages I was chained to that earth-supporting pillar, with a bottomless abyss yawning beneath, froze my spirit with fear. Suddenly, it seemed after millenniums of torment, a shining one flew to me on swift wings, and, wrenching my bonds asunder, carried me away to the mountain of Paradise, and there abode with me as my happy mate. I saw her so clearly, that bright-winged genius, that I remembered her features long afterwards as one remembers the face of a real acquaintance, and the memory of her smile lay long in my heart like a secret treasure. She was of snow-white complexion, fairer than the daughters of men, and her name was Adina.

That night a new thing sprang up in my heart, even as when the earth awakes and sends forth flowers at the magic touch of Spring, or as when a child awakes in the morning and, seeing on the ground the rare wonder of snowflakes, asks, 'What is that?' and his mother replies, 'Lo! Istar has

clipped white feathers from the wing of the eagle Alala, and let them fall to the ground.' Then, for the first time, I knew the secret of love and the charm of womanhood; and often, on dreary days of bondage, that inner fountain has opened afresh, and my heart has rejoiced at the thought of the coming of Adina; and yet, again, I have sometimes wept at the thought that she might never come, and was nowhere upon earth.

In the morning I was awakened by a loud chattering, when, opening my eyes, I was dreadfully alarmed by seeing many black figures and faces that grinned at me on the neighbouring trees. At first I supposed I had landed on an island of demons; but, bethinking myself, I recognised those creatures as apes, such as sailors sometimes brought in the ships which visited Ur. When I stirred myself and shouted they took to flight, and then, feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst, I went and pulled some dates, and finding a spring of water, I partook of it and thanked my god Ea. I could see no trace of man or beast on the island other than the apes, so sitting down in the warm sunshine where was a bank of clay, I spent some hours in writing out forty-six lines of the 'Battle of Marduk with the Dragon' as a thank-offering for the preservation of my life.*

On the afternoon of that day I came to another grove of dates, and climbed one of the trees to gather fruit for my evening meal. Whilst thus engaged, I was startled by hearing a human voice,

* See Appendix, Note F.

and looking about, I saw, standing on a mound between me and the setting sun, a venerable-looking man with a white beard, who held in his hand a bent bow with an arrow pointed at me. I judged it better to descend quickly than to remain where I was and be shot, so, lighting upon the ground, I approached the stranger, whom I took to be the lord or genius of the island, and falling down, I bowed myself to the ground seven times before him. All this time he had not spoken to me, and at length I looked up in astonishment, and, lo! I saw that he had discovered my clay tablets, and was reading what I had inscribed thereon. At length, approaching me with a smiling face, he raised me up, saying: 'Fear not, my son; I know thou art of the children of my own people, and hast been sent to me by the mighty Prince Marduk, the lord of eternity, whom I also worship. He has preserved thy life that thou mightest come to me and minister to me and be to me as a son.'

Having thus said, he led me up to a habitation which he had made for himself in a cave, where he prepared me a repast, and fed me with venison and fruits of the island. That night we sat up long talking, even till I was weary and longed to sleep, and until the feet of the hunter Tammuz* stood in the west upon the watery circle of the horizon, so eager was my entertainer to learn news of Babylon, and of all the changes that had taken place there since he left.

The next day he led me forth and showed me

* The constellation Orion.

how to cut and pile up fuel for firewood, to fetch water from the spring, to prepare the day's meals, and to store up fruits for the winter. Thus, he said, he would himself be more free to continue in study and prayer. That day he told me the story of his life, of which I will give a brief record.

'I am,' said he, 'the hermit Abilbel, son of Kirban of Sippara, who was the chief Satam of the treasure-house of Kuri-Galzu, King of Babylon. I was a soldier in the days of my youth, and fought against the Elamites and Hittites, and was afterwards taken captive by the men of Assur, and was sold to Ediru, a merchant of Nineveh. In course of years I accompanied my master to Phœnicia, and even to Egypt, and went through many and great dangers. Everywhere I saw much evil, confusion and misery upon earth: everywhere I saw tokens of the primal curse that still rests on the world. I saw fair countries invaded from different points by foreign peoples, cities taken and ravaged, and their peaceful inhabitants carried captive. Many impaled prisoners I saw set up in rows to be devoured by vultures; others flayed alive or exposed to other horrible mutilations and indignities. I saw the vanquished who remained at home with their eyes put out and their ears cut off, and others, who were led away bound with ropes, beaten and sold in markets. Everywhere was the voice of sighing and groaning, until I, who had been an ardent warrior in youth, grew weary and sick of the horrors of war. I saw that the root of all this evil was in the human heart, in my own not less than that of

other men, and I sought to learn whether there was no remedy, human or divine, for this deep-rooted disease. The more I searched, however, the darker and more perplexed I grew; for I became the more aware of a dreadful inward disharmony and warfare, many of my desires tending in an irresistible current towards those things which other and more august voices within me condemned as deadly to the soul, just as I found that some deities patronized and encouraged what others opposed and condemned. Is the world, then, presided over by warring powers, and is there no central harmony anywhere? Has our own nature been jointly wrought in the primal mould by creators at war with one another? These questions darkened my days and troubled my dreams by night, and though I sought their solution, there was no man that could bring me help.*

'I was athirst for the living water of wisdom, as when the wild ass of the desert wanders hither and thither from channel to channel, like a fleeting shadow, in the time of drought. I sat at the feet of the elders, and of those whose hair had grown white in course of their quest of knowledge. I drank deeply of the springs of Accad, and of the primeval wisdom which Ea taught to the ancients on the shores of the Eastern Sea; I inquired of the Phœnicians, and perused the sacred books of Sanchoniathon; and I sought the fountains of Egypt, and learnt of those whose lifetime was devoted to the worship of Mâout: but though these believed in

* See Appendix, Note G.

the triumph of light over darkness under the victorious sway of Ra; and though they professed to have found the truth through union to and assimilation with Ra, they failed to satisfy me as to what the truth was, or that they themselves had truly attained the inward light and harmony of truth.

'Whilst living in Egypt I heard of a people called the Eberu, who worshipped one Supreme God under the name of El, and the hope arose within me that the truth might be found with them; but when I learnt that this people had fallen into the condition of slaves, my heart sank within me, for I was unable to believe in an all-powerful god who could allow his worshippers to be enslaved and oppressed.

'In passing through the country of the Amorites, I saw at Urusalim, the city of the priest-king Obed-melech, the temple of Salem, which is the shrine of El-elion, the Most High,* and once more the joyful hope awoke within me of finding a Supreme God, perfect in power and goodness, who reigns above and behind all the confusion and evil of the world, and who will at length bring all into subjection to his will; but, on closer inquiry, I found that the worship paid to El-elion at Urusalim had been greatly debased in these latter days, and had become mixed with the corrupt religion of the Amorites. Yet from that time forward I have clung to the belief that One who is supremely good, as well as powerful, rules over the world. Him I have sought and worshipped under the name of El and Ea; and He has often drawn near to me, once at a time of sore

* See Appendix, Note H.

sickness, and sometimes, again, in visions of the night-watches.

'After spending some years in the western lands, I sailed by a ship of Ur, resolving to return to Babylon and instruct my countrymen in the truth I had learnt. But the vessel was wrecked on the coast of Punt, and a voice from on high told me I was not yet worthy to be a teacher of divine things: wherefore I resolved to separate myself from all men for seven years, and so I retired to this island. If, then, my son, thou willest to abide here with me for three years, thou mayest return with me to Babylon as my companion and helper.'

Sometimes Abilbel would retire for days to a cave high up the chief summit of the island. Once, when I had fetched him up his customary portion of dried figs and a cruse of water, he said: 'I have been meditating much lately upon the being of the Supreme God, El or Ea. He is the One, the Invisible, the Almighty, beside whom all others are as nothing. All other gods are but shadows and reflections of Ea, save His son Merodach, by whom Ea created the solid earth out of the abyss, and who is the mediator between Ea and the world. I have seen that the whole earth and every human heart is so afflicted with sin and innumerable evils, that the will of Ea is not being wrought in it. But His will must be carried out; therefore He must interpose at length to deliver the captives of sin. But how? Even as Ea from of old has established order in the heavens, so that the stars are as obedient servants in a well-ordered palace, and as He sent His son to

vanquish Bohu and the dragon, and brought the face of the world into order, so He must send His son to accomplish His final labour of vanquishing sin and all the evils that follow in its train.'

Whilst the remembrance of the dangers I had escaped was still fresh upon my spirit, and there was still some charm of novelty in my sojourn on the island, my heart was well content to remain in the service of Abilbel. No doubt he exacted from me a considerable amount of daily work; 'for,' said he, 'the spirit of youth is as an unbroken steer, which never comes to much good unless it is early trained to bear the yoke.' Yet he was a man truly venerable and wise, and I found pleasure in his converse, especially when he described the various lands and peoples among whom he had sojourned. By-and-by, however, I began to find the hermit island no better than Dilmon, and I would look wistfully towards the coast of Arabia, which was visible in the distance, and I envied the sea-birds, which had but to spread their wings and fly across in the space of a few hours.

After a time I began to busy myself in secretly preparing a raft, on which I purposed to put off from the island; and after having completed the work, I waited for a favourable wind. Then, very early one morning, whilst Abilbel was yet asleep, I embarked upon the raft. I had fixed upon it two upright poles, between which I stretched a sail of plaited palm-leaves, which suited the purpose in the gentle breeze which wafted me slowly landwards. When I had made half a league or so from

the island, on turning round I beheld a column of smoke rising up from the nearest point, and I could faintly perceive the hermit signalling to me to come back. However, I had said farewell to him in my heart, and I held steadfastly to my course, and that was the last I have seen or heard of this singular man. Yet sometimes I have doubted whether this might not have been one of those turning-points which occur in men's lives, when one turns his back to the light of true life; for Abilbel, I am assured, was a sincere seeker of wisdom, and a friend of the Supreme God. I have questioned whether some of the hardships and woes which pursued me afterwards were not sent as chastisements for this act of disobedience to the inward call of the Supreme.

Simran's Journal.

Twenty-second day of the month Kislim (*November*). —The weather becomes more and more severe. Some snow fell during the night, and has whitened the roof of my keeper's hut; and—still stranger and more ominous sight—there are several pendent pillars of ice hanging from the rock in front of my loophole window, like the chill fingers of Winter let down in readiness to strangle me. I have a dark foreboding that I shall never come back up into the sunshine out of the deep valley of winter into which I am fast descending. My cell is only lined with dried leaves and moss, which furnish me with but a scanty covering at night. Only once have I prevailed with my gaoler—a surly brute, who spends half his days in a drunken sleep—to let me have a

few faggots, with which, by means of the tinder I still carry with me, I was able to make a fire. There is a hole in the roof conveniently situated for furnishing a vent for the smoke, and I have employed an hour or two to-day in raising some clay out of the deep layer which forms the floor of my cell, to fashion a rude chimney to carry the smoke upward. My only food, consisting of ground corn mixed with acorns, is scarce fit for the nourishment of cattle; and only twice have I obtained a small jar of goat's-milk instead of the water which is my ordinary beverage.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAVE OF MANAH.

IN course of the day I was wafted slowly towards the mainland, and at nightfall I made land not far from the town of Akkoz. Here I found kind entertainment from the townsfolk; but I deemed it prudent to say nothing about my sojourn with the hermit, but simply gave out that I was a Sumerian who had been shipwrecked. Hearing that a merchant of Ur was in town, and was just about to start with a caravan, I hastened to call upon him, and begged to be allowed to accompany him, for I dreaded lest Abilbel should come to the mainland and claim me as his slave. The merchant, whose name was Azrah, received me kindly, and agreed to take me as his servant. I was now tall and active, and able to play the man among my fellows: so he furnished me with weapons on account of the dangers of the route. The caravan was first to proceed northwards to the country of the Minæans, to trade in the cities of Ammizedec, King of Saba; and the route thither, as I have hinted, was somewhat dangerous, being

infested at one part by a band of robbers, called the Arizim, or terrible ones, to whom many travellers had fallen victims. The number of these brigands was indeed small, and they never ventured to attack a strong caravan; but they were very daring ruffians, and their stronghold had never been discovered.

Azrah had been warned against them before we set out, but, being of a bold, resolute spirit, and deeming the strength of his party to be sufficient, he affected to despise the danger, declaring that he had several times passed that way, and, moreover, that he was under the special protection of his god Ea. Nevertheless, he took ample precautions: a vigilant outlook was kept by day, and by night the party slept within a circle formed of the camels and the merchandise. I and another young man named Milzar, who was a little older and more experienced than myself, were oftentimes told off to walk sentry by turns round the circle. It was awful to me to walk thus in the silence of the night, between the living and the dead: the stars hung out their lamps overhead, and the dread stillness of the desert would only be broken by the cry of the jackal, the scream of some night-demon, the unquiet grunting of the camels, or the muttering of some turbaned sleeper whose head had fallen off the bale on which he had pillowed himself.

Shortly after leaving Akkoz we entered upon a scorched and parched-up region—barren, verdureless and treeless, save for an occasional clump of dwarf palms. The sun glared down with unabated force, and the crimson sands were ribbed with wavy ridges

like a vast red level sea. It was the first time I had travelled in the Southern Desert, and I was awed by the strange loneliness, brooding over it day by day. It is a region silent as the tomb, a land of demons and monsters of death; where our way, at the best but a hardened track across the sand, would have often been entirely lost but for the waymarks set up from of old by passing travellers—an example to life's wayfarers to set up at least some little mark which shall be helpful to others when we ourselves have been forgotten. At times we passed the skeleton of a dead camel imbedded in the sand, and again, though more rarely, we passed a caravan of living camels and men, and sometimes a pillar of drifted sand would whirl rapidly in the breeze across our track, as our route led onwards amid ranges of gaunt, weird, craggy hills.

We journeyed thus many days, till, coming into a region of bad repute, it was open to us to take a less frequented path than the usual one, and hoping thereby to find greater security against attack, our leader unhappily chose the less ordinary route. We were now on our twenty-seventh day's journey, and all went well with us till about noon of that day, when we had reached a narrow and rocky defile, the slopes of which were clothed with the rethem shrub. Just as our leader was ordering a halt, that we might seek shelter under the shadow of the rocks from the overpowering heat, and when Milzar and I, who were the nimblest of the whole party, had slid down from our camels, there was a great commotion, mingled with cries. Running round to

see what had befallen the party, we perceived that Azrah, the merchant, had fallen from his camel pierced through the heart with an arrow. The unseen foe was plying his shafts with deadly aim against the other members of the troop ; and I and my comrade owed our safety to the fact of our having lighted down on the opposite side from where the robbers were posted, and being thus sheltered behind the camels. The bandits, who had at first been concealed among the bushes, quickly rushed from their retreat, and cut down the camel-drivers as they were dismounting. After this it was vain for us two youths to think of remaining longer to defend the caravan : we would but too surely and speedily have shared our comrades' fate had we not beaten a precipitate retreat and escaped under covert of the bushes.

My companion and I continued our flight for the space of an hour or two, until, exhausted with fatigue and thirst, we sat down under the shadow of a rock to rest, and consider what direction we ought to take. Fortunately, I carried by my side a flask of water, the contents of which were a great refreshment, so, after having drunk, we arose and continued our flight until the star of Istar came out and night overtook us. Then we lay down under a rock, and slept soundly till the morning. When we awoke, we took the bearings of the country by the direction of the rising sun, and, being resolved to find our way back to the sea, we struck southwards ; but, becoming very hungry, we spent most of the forenoon in searching for food. We succeeded in

making an imitation of an Egyptian boomerang from the stem of a rethem plant, with which, after much difficulty, we succeeded in stalking two sand-grouse. These we cooked at a fire of dry wood, kindled by twirling together two sticks of tinder-wood, which we always carried with us, and those two birds formed the bulk of the food on which we had that day to subsist. In the afternoon we became uncertain of our direction, and must certainly, judging by the sequel, have been going round in a circle.

By the evening of that day we had not yet struck the route to Akkoz, and, as darkness came on, we laid ourselves down to sleep among some bushes. My companion was erelong fast asleep, but, for myself, I could not close my eyes for a time for fear of evil spirits, and for thinking that the spot was haunted. Sometimes I heard as it were the distant or muffled sound of voices; sometimes it was like the cry of some strange beast, and sometimes it sounded like beautiful music. I thought to awaken my comrade, but sleep suddenly overpowered me, and I knew nothing more until the sun's hot rays smote me on the eyelids and I awoke. My companion had been awakened by the same cause and at the same moment, and, looking up, our eyes met, and we were about to speak, when we were startled by the sound of a man's voice somewhere beneath us. There was a steep rocky bank below where we lay, and at its foot we perceived the figure of a man who seemed to have risen out of the earth. He was speedily followed by another, and then another, until there were seven in all, each of whom was

armed with bow and spear. What was our dismay when we recognized in these men the party of robbers by whom we had been attacked two days before and our friends barbarously murdered! We were terrified lest they should discover us, and as we crouched among the bushes we overheard them making their plans for the day. They were to go to a neighbouring town with the camels and part of the booty, and dispose of these at the market.

'Wouldn't it be best for one of us to stay and guard the cavern?' we heard one of them say.

'No, no,' replied one or two others; 'Lilith is quite enough to keep guard against any possible visitors.'

In a little time, to our great relief, they were out of sight, and we began to debate whether we should follow them to the town and try to recover the camels and the other goods; but we concluded that, since we were quite unknown at that town, we were likely to come to harm if we attempted to deprive the robbers of their plunder. Next we discussed the question whether we should not try to make an entrance into the cavern, since it was probable that some valuables were there when one of the robbers had thought it necessary to leave a guard to watch it. But what did they mean by Lilith being sufficient for a guard?

'If,' said I, 'it was the demon Lilith they meant, I do not fear her, because I carry an amulet which is a potent charm against her attacks.'

'And if,' said Milzar, 'it is a girl or a woman named Lilith, it will take more than that to deter me from entering the cave.'

Therefore we went down to find the entrance to the cavern, but were at first surprised in seeing no trace of any opening. It had, indeed, been very cunningly closed up by pouring a large heap of sand at the entrance. When we found this out and cleared away the obstruction, we discovered a very narrow passage at the foot of the rock, only sufficient to permit of one person entering at a time. After three times repeating the Accadian incantation against demons, my companion went in first, and I followed after. We were soon able to stand upright, and Milzar lost no time in kindling a light. The roof sloped upwards as we advanced, and as we warily picked our steps onward and inward, lo! we were suddenly terrified at the sight of two fiery eyes glaring out upon us from the dark. The creature, whether demon or wild beast, made a rush towards us, and we had barely time to elude its grasp by darting along the side of the rock. Alas! however, our exit from the cavern was now barred up; this terrible creature, which had been set to guard the cave, was between us and the entrance.

We had no longer any delight in the thought of the wonders of that cavern; we could only gaze with horror at the savage beast whose rattling chain reached from one side of the chamber to the other, and whose roaring sounded terrible in that hollow place. This, no doubt, was Lilith, of which the robbers had spoken; it was speckled like the *nimar* of the land of the Hittites; and it was either a real leopard or an evil demon in the form of a leopard. Twice we tried to spring past it, but it was too agile for us;

and the third time it caught Milzar by the shoulder, and had I not quickly wrenched him back, he would without doubt have been killed by the powerful beast. We then sat down in the darkness and prayed to our gods, but chiefly to Merodach, to come to our help, and then we consulted what was best to be done. On looking round, I chanced to spy something red in a distant corner of the cave, and, as a new thought suddenly occurred to me, I ran eagerly towards it, and found it to be the remains of a fire, with embers still smouldering and a pile of faggots lying by it on the hearth. On hearing the cry of joy which had escaped me at the sight, Milzar came towards me and asked what it was?

'Merodach,' said I, 'has heard our cry, and here he has shown me the means of our deliverance. My father, who was trained to the chase and capture of wild animals, assured me that no wild beast, however fierce, will stand the attack of one who suddenly rushes upon him by night with a blazing firebrand. Let us, therefore, kindle these faggots, and, either holding them in our hands or strewing them along one side of the entrance to the cave, rush quickly past the monster.'

This counsel approved itself to my comrade, and so quickly did we recover our spirits that Milzar proposed we should take a tour of inspection round the cave ere we made the attempt to escape. We found that at this point, which was a considerable way from the entrance, the cave had expanded into a spacious hall; and right above where the fire had

been made the rock was cleft to a great height, affording a glimpse of daylight from a point high up in the roof. A little beyond the fireplace there was an opening, as low as an ordinary doorway, in the side of the rock, and from the dark passage in the interior we could hear the trickling of water. This was a joyful sound to us, for we were very thirsty; so, taking an inflammable firebrand from the faggot, and having kindled it, we made our way along the passage until we reached a corner of rock where water was dripping into an artificial basin of stone.

Having quenched our thirst, we found that the cave extended still further inwards, and we soon reached a chamber which was evidently the dining-room of the robbers, for it was furnished with a table formed of a flat slab of rock, and in artificial cupboards of rock hewn into the wall were ranged utensils and food of various kinds. We had no feeling of compunction in partaking of some fruit and venison, since we had been plundered of all we possessed by the robbers on a previous day; but, as we were sitting at the table moistening the viands with some wine which we found in a skin-bottle, our light suddenly went out, when to our surprise, and at first to our consternation, we perceived a clear light shining in a recess further in the cave. Cautiously advancing in that direction, we perceived that the light proceeded from a lamp suspended from the roof of a chamber of moderate extent.

We both uttered at the same moment a cry of admiration, for this was evidently the treasure-chamber of the thieves. All around the walls were suspended

glittering ornaments of gold and precious stones: collars, chains, and bracelets; daggers and swords; cups and vases of gold or of coloured glass; golden earrings, signet-rings, and jewelled fans; gems, cut and uncut; diamonds, rubies, amethysts, and so on; whilst in a square coffer hollowed in the rock, and covered with a slab, was a large quantity of gold-dust. As we feasted our eyes in examining these riches, oblivious for the moment of the terror lying in wait for us at the entrance, our hearts suddenly stood still as we became aware of a gigantic figure looming through the darkness with a monstrous face looking down upon us with a cruel smile. We were terror-stricken and speechless at the thought that this was some supernatural being; but, by-and-by, recovering from the shock, we saw that it was the figure of a great idol carved in the rock. On its breast were two bronze rings, and underneath these we read the inscription, graven in rude characters:

'I am Manah the implacable:
Woe to the mortal whom I embrace!'

Somewhat disconcerted by this discovery, we hastily resolved to retreat, and to try to make good our exit from the cave as quickly as possible—not, however, until we had secreted about our clothing some of the gems we found in the chamber. Then we groped our way back towards the spot where the fire had been kindled, the last red embers of which were almost extinct. We were just in the act of blowing the fire to a flame, when all at once our blood was chilled by our hearing the sound of voices at the entrance. Now indeed we gave ourselves up

for lost, for a few moments sufficed to show that it was the robbers themselves who had returned, and were already effecting an entrance. We instinctively sought a hiding-place, and, running along the passage leading towards the inner chamber, we found a recess near the dripping fountain, and, crouching down in a corner, we waited in breathless horror till the robbers should approach. Now did we cry with despairing hearts to our gods, and bitterly did we curse the foolish curiosity which had brought us into such danger.

The bandits had all entered the large hall of the cave; we could hear their loud, harsh voices, as if disputing in anger; and we could occasionally see them moving about, each with a lighted taper in his hand. Evidently they were much excited, and from fragments of their talk we gathered that they were discussing the question as to whether anyone could have entered the cave, or if some fox had left the entrance open by scraping away the sand.

Milzar was just proposing to me in a whisper that we should take advantage of the comparative obscurity, and, making a rush, sword in hand, through the cave, find our way to the entrance and take our chance with the leopard, when all egress was straightway barred by the robbers, who came cautiously along the passage, each with a taper in one hand and a naked sword in the other. We crouched together more closely, and scarcely ventured to breathe; but, alas! we were not to escape discovery. One of the robbers, lowering his taper, began to poke the point of his sword into the recess

where we lay, and pricked the knee of my comrade; then he exclaimed to his companions, 'Ha! I have found the culprits!' and to us, 'Come forth and declare yourselves!'

Milzar and I drew our swords, resolved to sell our lives as dearly as possible; but even in the act of rising we were disarmed, and had our hands bound with thongs behind our backs. Then, holding up their lights in our faces, they closely examined us.

'Were not you,' demanded the leader, 'those servants of Azrah, the merchant, who escaped from us in the valley of Zohar?'

From their knowledge of our late master's name, we inferred that this band of robbers must have accomplices in the town of Akkoz who gave them information in regard to the caravans which were about to set out for Minæ. We confessed that his surmise was correct, and begged him to have mercy upon us; but his only response was to exclaim:

'So much the better we have found you! You shall not escape from us a second time—unless,' said he, laughing grimly, 'you consent to the proposal we nave to make.'

As we looked eagerly to hear what was to follow, the others, evidently accustomed to this piece of pleasantry, laughed harshly in chorus.

'Ye are naturaliy eager to learn our terms,' said the leader. 'We will be generous to you, because you are both young and good-looking. We are commissioned to look out two goodly youths to wed our lady of the cave. You shall have that honour

and bliss—yes, you shall be wedded to the Lady Manah.'

At this our blood ran cold with horror, for we remembered the image in the inner chamber with its legend :

> 'I am Manah the implacable :
> Woe to the mortal whom I embrace !'

To the robbers, however, the affair seemed as an excellent jest, and they hurried us to the innermost chamber where stood the hideous image of Manah, and bound us with thongs to the bronze rings upon her breasts. We had visited the cave at a very opportune moment, they said, for they were bound by oath to sacrifice at least two yearly victims to their goddess, and the year had nearly expired. They informed us that Lilith was to be our executioner ; but meantime, as they were ravenously hungry, we should have the pleasure of seeing them partake of food ere we ourselves furnished a meal to Lilith, the priestess of Manah.

Never before or since have I passed through a season of horror comparable to that hour during which we stood watching those armed fiends as, seated around the stone table, they feasted with brutal gaiety, our presence seeming to furnish a pleasant condiment to their food. Milzar, who understood their language better than I, learned from their conversation that, after setting out that morning on their proposed journey, they had unexpectedly fallen in with a caravan of goods, which they had captured. This was the cause of their early return, and of our present desperate circumstances.

Among other plunder, the robbers had that day taken several bottles of wine, which they now began to drink. Whilst thus engaged, they frequently addressed themselves to us with many wicked jests, and they drank to our health and to our wedded bliss on the pretended occasion of our marriage with Manah. But, even while they drank, a change came over them : their speech grew thick and their aspect drowsy, and one by one their heads dropped down on the stone table. With breathless amazement we watched this new turn of affairs, and the questions rose to our lips unuttered : Was this simply a ruse to tantalize us ? Was it the genuine sleep of fatigue ? Or—with wild hope, as we shot sidelong glances at each other, we mooted the question—was this the effect of some somnific, or even poisonous, drug with which the wine had been, perhaps intentionally, charged by its late owners ?

At length Milzar whispered in my ear :

' Now or never is the time to act. If these men are shamming sleep, we are in no worse case than we were if we try to escape.'

Yet I saw not, for my own part, what possible way of escape was open to us ; for we were bound fast to the hideous idol with our hands behind us, and we had no knife or dagger about us, nor any free hand to use them in cutting the thongs that bound us. But the keen eye of my comrade had noted an object which held out at least as much hope as a floating straw to a drowning man.

The table at which the robbers were reclining was not far from where we stood, and the man who

was nearest to us was not more than two paces or so from Milzar, and at his side the jewelled hilt of a sheathed dagger, which hung from his girdle, could be seen by the light of the lamp. My companion, by compressing his feet together, succeeded in pulling off one of his sandals; then he reached forth his naked foot in the direction of the dagger—slowly, cautiously, trying to see if he could reach so far. Being of tall stature, he succeeded in touching the point of the hilt with his toes.

The moment was an intensely critical one, and Milzar hesitated to make a movement which might awaken the sleeper. In the stillness, broken only by the faint purl of the fountain and the troubled breathing of the sleepers, I could hear his joints cracking with the intensity of his exertion, whilst the perspiration stood in drops upon his forehead. Somehow he succeeded in grasping with his toes the extreme end of the jewelled hilt and in pulling it from the sheath, but before he could draw it towards himself it fell with a clang upon the stony floor. One of the robbers moved restlessly and muttered something, as if about to awake, and for a minute's space we stood gazing petrified at the turbaned heads as they reclined on the table, supported by the arms of the sleepers. Slowly and cautiously Milzar drew the weapon towards us until he was able to grasp the handle firmly with his toes. Being unable to use it on his own bonds, he signified to me in a whisper that he wished to try to cut with it the thongs which were firmly bound round my waist and fastened to a ring on the idol's breast. The attempt was one of

extreme difficulty to him and of danger to me; it demanded vast contortionist agility on his part to get the point of the weapon inserted between two of the thongs without piercing my body. The keenness of the blade was speedily proved by the facility with which one of the thongs was cut, and this having somewhat loosened the others, it became easier to cut two more, after which I succeeded in writhing myself free of the bronze ring, though my wrists were still tightly bound together behind my back. Then Milzar lifted the handle of the dagger until I was able to grasp it with one hand, and by his direction I felt with the other for the thongs which bound his waist, and cautiously inserted the point of the weapon and severed his bonds. It seemed hours, however, ere we succeeded in completely freeing ourselves, whilst ever and anon the starting and stertorous breathing of the sleepers sent a pang of terror to our hearts.

At last we were free, and then for a moment we hesitated as to whether we should not seek to take speedy vengeance upon our tormentors; but in another instant more prudent counsels prevailed, and we rushed away through the passage leading to the large hall of the cave. We made straight for the fireplace, hoping to find some burning embers at which to kindle the faggots, in order to keep at bay the dreadful speckled monster who guarded the exit; but, alas! we found nothing but cold ashes. In another moment Milzar had taken out the tinder which he carried about with him, and was wildly twirling at the sticks. To make a flame in this way,

however, was ever a work of time, and time was never so precious as then. In stooping down I still groped among the ashes, and suddenly became aware that one red ember was left. Applying our tinder to this, we speedily blew it to a flame and ignited the faggot. We had made a great blaze, whose light flickered upon the walls and high-vaulted roof of the cavern, and lit up the speckled skin and glaring eyes of the leopard.

My companion led the way, and I followed, each with a blazing faggot in his hand, part of which we dashed upon the floor in the midst of the passage, to overawe the monster as we rushed past him.

We had safely run the blockade, when suddenly we were arrested by finding the entrance barred in an unexpected manner. It was not now blocked with sand, but by a massive stone inserted from the inside into a groove evidently made for the purpose, and our strength or skill was insufficient to lift the barrier.

The flame of the blazing faggots had already gone out in smoke, and the savage beast, now recovered from his fright, pursued us to the end of his chain, till we felt his hot breath upon our feet, which we had to draw in as much as possible in order to be just out of reach of his claws. Our exertions were terrible but fruitless—the stone was immovable—and once or twice we had to pause in sheer exhaustion in order to take breath.

Finally, after breathing a prayer to our gods, we bethought us of pushing the stone a little horizontally before trying to lift it. The barrier, which must

have been locked into its resting-place by some rude arrangement in the way of tenon and mortise, moved a little, and then we found ourselves just capable of lifting it up and drawing it aside. In another minute we stood once more in the sunshine, and gave thanks to Merodach and to the Fire-god for our wonderful deliverance.

Journal Continued.

Eighth day of Tabit (*December*). — Yesterday I watched the strange spectacle of snow falling steadily all day, and lying piled up as a dense mantle upon the ground. Rarely had I previously witnessed the phenomenon of falling snow; never had I seen it in like abundance. To me it was bewildering to watch what appeared like a continual cloud of white feathers, darkening the air as they fell slowly and silently to the ground, or were whirled about in eddying curves by the gusts of wind, which wafted them even into my cell. It seemed to cut me off more than ever from human fellowship, threatening to bury me and all living things as effectually as the race of men were overwhelmed by the flood in the days of Hasisadra. This morning, however, my gruff gaoler came to me with some meagre fare, after having cut a passage like a canal through the deep bank of snow. He even yielded, though with a bad grace, to my entreaties so far as to allow me a handful of firewood, with which I have kept tolerably warm throughout the day.

CHAPTER IV.

EGYPTIAN BONDAGE.

EVEN in memory the events of the return journey, when we retraced our steps through that cruel region of hunger and thirst, are terrible to me. We bore the fierce anger of Samas day by day, and Kamsin, the demon of the desert-simoom, panted after us with his fiery breath. That we did not fall dead by the way is due to our having found, in a mountain chasm, a dripping spring, with whose scanty drops we filled our flasks.

After many days, our eyes were gladdened by the sight of the blue sea, where by good hap, as it then seemed, a ship was passing not far from the shore, to which we made signals that they might take us on board and convey us to some seaport. A boat approached us, manned by a dark-faced, sinister-looking crew, and so anxious were we to escape from that region of famine, that we readily went with them on board the vessel, which was bound for the land of Punt. I had been longing to get back to my native Ur and my father's house, yet so miser-

able had my plight now become that it appeared to matter little whither I was carried, provided I got the wherewithal to appease my hunger and thirst.

At first we were treated with apparent kindness, but when our health was somewhat restored, we learnt the true character of the captain and crew, who were nothing better than unscrupulous pirates and slave-traders. They put us in chains upon a bench among the slaves who toiled at the oar, and dealt out to us the same coarse fare as to the other captives.

When we reached the coast of Punt, we were not permitted to land, and the vessel was anchored at a coast-town merely to take in provisions, and goods consisting of gums, spices, and copper. I can never forget my first sight of those fertile shores. The moon was rising over the dark mountains, which approached the water's edge, and were terraced for cultivation to a great height. The air was full of the fragrance of scented fig-trees and aromatic plants. The moving light of fireflies twinkled among the groves, and in the evening stillness we could hear the song of bulbuls and the chattering of monkeys, and the more distant baying of watch-dogs and the strains of the lute. But the thought of my captive state poisoned my enjoyment, and I found that a heavy heart can turn even the feast of Paradise into a banquet of demons.

After two days we proceeded on our voyage up the Red Sea. We landed at the port of Pi-keheret, where Milzar and I were sold to an Egyptian, who took us, with several other captives, chained

together in a row, on the way to the city of Aûnû. The road along which we passed was a much frequented route, and day by day our limbs ached, and our throats were parched with heat and dust. Sometimes we passed a line of war chariots, or a company of foot-soldiers, bare-headed, clad with leathern apron, and armed with spear and shield and battle-axe, who marched past us with light, springy step; at another time it would be a troop of tall Shardians of the royal guard, armed with great two-edged swords. At the door of some wayside *khan* we would pass at times the camels and asses of a caravan of merchants, whose faces and garb betrayed their Eastern origin, and we would look wistfully to see if we could recognise the familiar face of some countryman and acquaintance, yet always in vain. Gangs of slaves, driven like ourselves by the driver's stick, were at work at some great building, towards which boat-loads of timber, brick, and stone were being conveyed along the canals.

Milzar and I were next to one another, and sometimes by night we tried to saw through the chain that bound us by rubbing it upon a stone, which formed our pillow, by the movement of our necks; but the only result was a kick or two from the surly prisoner who lay on my left hand, because my movements chafed him, and prevented his sleeping. It had been a dream of my youth to visit this famous country of Egypt; but now I was entering it a hopeless, footsore, and down-trodden slave. One day, as we halted in a certain village at the mid-day hour, and our drivers were in a house eating and drinking,

an old villager who chanced to be watering his garden, pitying our forlorn appearance, came and offered us water to drink. When we had drunk and been refreshed, and had uttered our thanks each in his own language, the cheery old man spoke to us a word for our encouragement, which had a wonderful effect upon me. 'Now, I wonder,' said he, 'which of you young men will be like the Syrian slave, Zaphnath-Paaneah, who rose from the dungeon to be grand-vizier to the king?' That word spoken in jest had a reviving power upon my mind, even greater than the draught of water upon my body. It awakened the hope that there might be a career for me in this country, and I determined to keep up my heart and rise, if it were possible, above the condition of a slave.

I was sold to a wealthy Egyptian named Sesra, a proprietor of flower and market-gardens, who put me, along with certain other slaves, to the task of drawing water from the great canal for the irrigation of his land. From sunrise to sunset I stood at the *shadouf*, in the heat of the sun, and in constant fear of the rod of my taskmaster, drawing up and emptying the water with palm-leaf baskets. Now I began to reap the bitter fruit of my foolish waywardness. In my wretchedness my heart went daily eastward to the land of my people, whilst I was chained in Egypt as a slave. Oftentimes mine eyes were too dim with tears to behold the pyramids which rose at a short distance off on the other side of the Nile. My days were spent in sighing and vain longing, and my spirit was bowed down to the earth. I prayed

to the gods of my country, but they seemed too far off for hearing or help. I was as a beast of burden: I found how weighty a load of misery the spirit of youth can bear without actually breaking. Yet the beasts of burden were in a more enviable plight, because, being made with eyes turned down towards the earth, they are content with the narrowest lot, if but food and drink are supplied them; but man, who is made with eyes that look upward, even to the stars, cannot thus be content. Nevertheless, there was always some phantom of hope luring me from thoughts of suicide, and keeping me from actually sinking under my load of misery.

I often thought in those days of the friendly old villager who had supplied us with water whilst I was on my way to Egypt; yet oftentimes those words seemed but to return to my memory in order to mock me, since I seemed to be in a dungeon out of which there was no outlet. One thing, however, which began to divert my mind from its gloomy thoughts was that, Ea having endowed me with an aptitude for languages, I began to find pleasure in learning the speech of the Egyptians from those about me and the boatmen on the canal. Nay, after a time, finding that one of my fellow slaves was a Hittite, and another an Achæan, I learned also to speak not a little of the strange tongues of those nations.

My master was a gentleman of leisure who rarely visited his country property; but one day, as he was walking with two friends on the bank of the canal, in passing by me he noticed some lines of Chaldean writing inscribed by me on the clay bank of the

canal. After looking upon them for a few moments, he turned towards me and, addressing me in an angry tone, he said, 'So, sirrah, thou idle Routen! is it thus you occupy your time? I shall cause your driver to increase your daily task of work.' I feared lest he should read what I had written, for, in truth, it was partly curses upon Egypt and the Nile, upon the pyramids, and the cat and beetle divinities of the country, and upon my taskmaster and Sesra himself; in part also it was prayers to Marduk and Ea for deliverance, but chiefly it was some lines from the epic of Isdubar. Whilst I looked to see whether I should be detected and punished, one of the gentlemen, who had a merry twinkle in his eyes, and was altogether the most engaging Egyptian I had seen, looking intently at the words, began to read in Egyptian what I had written from the poem of Isdubar. I trembled lest he should translate the rest; but, instead of this, he began to question me on my origin and education. Finding that I had been trained in the famous schools of Accad, and was versed in the wisdom of Chaldea, he looked with an eye of interest upon me, and I was grateful to him for not having betrayed my secret.

I afterwards learned that this gentleman, whose name was Hophra, was a man well born, and of great learning, and one who stood high in favour of the princes of the country. After he had conversed a little aside with my master, I was astonished and pleased to find that I was to be transferred to his service, for, as it turned out, he was occupied at that

time in studying the old language and learning of Accad, and wished to get help from me.

The time that followed was the happy part of my Egyptian experience. I lived in the library-house which my master had built at one corner of his garden. Here I first learnt the art of writing on papyrus, and was much employed transcribing and translating Assyrian cuneiform texts, and others in the ancient language of Accad. My master treated me more as a friend and comrade than as a slave; and often I would accompany him when he went out in a boat fishing on the river or fowling among the reeds, and I learnt to become expert in throwing the harpoon and launching the serpent-shaped boomerang. Sometimes we were accompanied on these excursions by the wife and daughter of my master. The latter, whose name was Merira, was a young lady of much beauty of the refined Egyptian type. She had great quickness and eagerness in learning, and was continually asking questions in regard to everything she saw, such as by whom this temple or that statue was founded, or what great event such and such a *stéle* commemorated. Her father took much pleasure in furthering her progress in scholarship, and had placed her under the tuition of some of the most learned priests in Memphis. Sometimes she visited the library where I and another scribe were employed in assisting her father, and often in the early morning I would hear her song as she took her accustomed walk amid the flowers of the neighbouring garden. Merira did not spend much of her day, as do most Egyptian ladies,

amid the endless details of the toilet, for they have female artists who attend them at set hours to anoint and paint and perfume them, to grease their hair, *rouge* their lips and pencil their eyelids and eyebrows with coal-black lines: but to me her charm was all the greater that it was so little assisted by art. Like some bright bird of freedom which unexpectedly enters a prisoner's cell, she would suddenly trip into the library with girlish frankness. She had much of the winsome manner of her father, who was on friendly terms with all creatures, and never treated even a slave with haughtiness. The details of her dress were ineffaceably engraven on my heart and memory: her hair was bound with a simple fillet, and often adorned with a flower; her light robe was girdled with a gay sash; on her feet she wore sandals of red leather; she had a necklace of many-coloured beads, and her wrists and ankles were adorned with bracelets of coloured glass.

My tremulous heart began to keep longing watch for the sound of her light footstep on the stair of the library, and the days dragged heavily on which she did not make her appearance. The thought of my dream-love Adina began to fade in my mind, or rather, I thought that Adina had become incarnate in this fair young Egyptian. Even the remembrance of my father, after whose presence and forgiveness I had pined, was sometimes absent from me for whole days. I now thought that the sun shone as kindly by the Nile as by the Euphrates; that the flowers were as sweet and the women as fair; I found that the sceptre of Istar is of sovereign power, and that

it is love that makes a home and a paradise of the dreariest spot. My prejudices against Egypt had vanished away, and I sang to myself snatches of the songs of Istar I had heard in my native Ur and Borsippa.

Merira began to be interested in the language of Babylon, and I wrote out for her on a roll of papyrus a series of lessons in the cuneiform characters. Sometimes I was alone in the library when she came to find a book, and once I ventured to show her a gem which I had brought with me from the land of Accuth, and had contrived to conceal in my girdle from my captors. I did not tell her that I had brought it from the cave of the robbers where Milzar and I had our perilous adventure with the leopard. It was a Babylonian carnelian stone, very precious, finely cut and ready to be set and engraved as a signet-stone. When I saw she admired this I gave it to her; and when I said that its brightness was outshone by the lustre of her eyes, and its rich colour was surpassed by the ruddiness of her cheek, she coloured the more; yet I thought it was not in anger. My Egyptian had by this time made such progress that I tried to write verses in which I addressed Merira as the priestess of Hor-em-khou, or the orient sun, who rises on the bud of the lotus flower that floats on the dark bosom of Nu, and who awakens the earth from sleep and revives the dead.

This brought, alas! a death-blow to my foolish hopes; for, having lost the verses, I found they must have fallen into the hands of Hophra. Merira came

no more to the library, and I saw her but once again. She was entering a chariot which was to convey her to Memphis : she turned and saluted me with tearful eyes ; my priestess of the rising sun had vanished for ever from my horizon, and with her all my delight in life for a time and all my interest in Egypt.

I began about this time to be more deeply concerned about the things of the unseen world and the nature of the gods, and began to compare the ancient Egyptian ideas on those subjects with the religion of Accad and Sumir. Specially was I interested in comparing the character of Horus, who fought with and vanquished the great dragon Set, with Bel or Merodach the vanquisher of Tiamat. Both are regarded as the mediator between men and the unseen God, and as the deliverer of mankind from evil. Hence I concluded that our ancient teachers and those of Egypt must have received their doctrine from the same source. My master, Hophra, did not often go to worship at the temple of Ptah, the great god of Memphis : he called himself the worshipper of Truth—the one thing that is true, eternal and permanent, and that has substantial reality amid all the transient appearances of time. The evil man, said he, and he that has a heart unpurged from sin, and who cannot be assimilated and united to the eternal unseen Osiris, is but an appearance, a passing shadow which must soon be blotted out.

At length my master, to my great sorrow, was stricken down by a deadly disease, and for a time I

nursed him day and night. That was a time of great confusion in Egypt, whose power had then reached the lowest ebb. The great kings Menephthah II. and Ramses, whose names had carried terror to distant lands, were gone, and, as when the strong bulls of the herd have fallen the jackals are emboldened to attack the flock, so the enemies of Egypt gathered from all sides, and the very slaves were rising against their masters, under the leadership of the Syrian Arisu, who finally became sole king of the country. At that period of lawlessness many fugitive slaves banded themselves together, like wild dogs, for mutual help, and, finding a party of twenty-one Babylonians thus associated, I was put by them at their head, and we resolved to attempt to make our escape from Egypt and find our way to our own land. We safely reached the shore of the Red Sea, where the passage across was not wide, and having seized a few fishing boats at a lonely part of the coast, we made our way across and entered the country of Mafka.

After crossing the Red Sea we passed through a region of drought and hunger, and at times we were in great danger of falling into the hands of the hostile Amalekites. We shaped our course towards the wilderness of Paran, which lay in our way towards Chaldea. Once we were two days without food and water, and, but for an occasional quail or jackal, which I caught by the Egyptian mode of fowling and hunting, we would all have left our bodies to the wild beasts of the desert. We began to despair of reaching the settled dwellings of men

when we suddenly encountered, in a narrow pass, a strong troop of Amorites who, coming from the north and taking advantage of the time of confusion in Egypt, were on their way to plunder the copper mines of Maganna,* in the region of Sinai. This party took us captive and, forcing us to accompany them, made us work as slaves at the mines until they had loaded two hundred camels and asses with metal. Though we could afterwards have escaped from them we were glad to accompany them northwards, for the sake of safety and the crumbs of food which they gave us. That wilderness journey was dreadful to us because of the long marches and the scarcity of food. The asses, which were each under the charge of one of the slaves, were heavily loaded with metal, so that we slaves had to walk behind them on foot, and sometimes, when menaced by a strong force of Edomites, we were forced to take a rapid detour through the mountains, which proved very exhausting.

When we were passing near Kadesh, in the desert of Paran, we skirted a great plain on which was encamped a peaceful population which our guide informed us were the people of the Hebrews, who had formerly been slaves in Egypt, but had made their escape, and were now leading a nomad life in the desert. From the heights where we pitched our tents for the night we could observe their camp arranged in beautiful order in thirteen divisions, seen from the mountain like the square plots of a well-cultivated garden, and having a large central tent

* See Appendix. Note I.

overhung by a pillar of smoke which had a strange fiery appearance by night.

At length we reached Beersheba, where was the great well dug in the time of Abraham, the Hebrew, very deep in the limestone rock, and here at length our sufferings from thirst came to an end. On entering Canaan and the hill-country of Salem, the Amorites passed from city to city disposing of their goods until we reached Gaza, where I met my former friend Milzar, from whom I had been separated for two years. With him I concerted a plan for making my escape out of the hands of my Amorite masters. As I had been in bondage and in unjust service for the space of a year and had received no recompense but blows, I judged that it would not be wrong to carry off with me part of my masters' property as payment for my service. So I watched my opportunity and took with me two young asses and a tent, and made my way in the direction of Kirjath-arba and a little beyond Gaza and was joined by Milzar. We passed over the hills by a solitary track and crossed several rocky valleys until, on the evening of the second day, we pitched our tent under a terebinth tree in a narrow secluded valley.

We were sitting down to our evening meal, which consisted of a few dried figs, and one or two rock partridges which I had that day taken, when two travellers passed us who addressed us in the Egyptian language and inquired their way towards Salem. By this time I was well acquainted with Egyptian, and we invited the two men to partake of our scanty repast, which they gladly did, and added to the meal

a little dried fruit from their own store. Our two guests were both tall, well-armed, and of warlike countenance, and in aspect more resembled the children of Shem than those of Menes; yet withal, their looks were such as inspired trust. Now Milzar was acquainted with the various routes in Canaan, having passed through the land on a trading tour with his master Azrah; and as the men were, so far as we could judge, both honest and God-fearing, we invited them to rest with us that night, and Milzar offered to conduct them towards Jerusalem, whither we ourselves had meant to journey. When the men discovered that we were from the land of Shinar they addressed us in a dialect of our own language which we had not much difficulty in understanding, and when they learnt that we had been slaves in Egypt and were seeking to make our way to our native country, they entirely opened their hearts to us.

Their names, they said, were Oshea and Kaleb, and they were men of the nation of the Hebrews, the same whom we had seen encamped in the wilderness of Paran. Their God, they said, had given the country of Canaan to their forefather Abraham for a possession, and, through all the long years of Egyptian servitude, the people had never entirely forgotten that Canaan was theirs by Divine right; and now they were advancing to make good their claim.

'The time,' said Oshea, 'draws nigh when we must win by the sword what God promised to our father Abraham, and He has already prepared our

way by weakening the arm of Egypt, which has so long extended its sovereignty over the cities of Canaan, sometimes even unto Tyre and the confines of Hamath of the Hittites; and, just as God made a way for His people by drying up an arm of the Red Sea, so He is drying up the power of Egypt to permit His people to take possession of the promised land.'

We asked the men what was the purpose of their present journey in the land of Canaan.

'We have been sent,' said they, 'along with ten others, chosen from each tribe of the children of Israel, for the purpose of spying out the quality of the country and the strength of its present inhabitants. The other spies are beyond the mountain to the south. They are advancing more slowly, and the further they proceed into the country the more are they discouraged by seeing how many and lofty are the fortress cities of Canaan, built on almost every commanding height, not of brick, like the fortresses of Egypt, but of massive hewn stone. They deem it madness for our ill-armed forces to attempt to wrest this land from the warlike and stately population which holds it, and we greatly fear that they will carry back to the camp of Israel an evil report of our prospect of subduing the country.'

'And what then,' I asked, 'is your own opinion?'

'Our strength,' said Kaleb, 'lies not in our numbers nor in the might of our own arms, but in the living God who marches with us, and before whose presence the whole earth is shaken when He once bestirs

Himself. As for the number of the fortresses of Canaan, in that very circumstance lies their weakness: for each city and tribe has its king who is but a petty chieftain, who has never known what it is to stand alone against a great host, having been taught to look for protection to Pharaoh, unto whom they paid tribute. And as for the lofty height of their mountain-fortresses, I know that it consists in part of wood, which can be thrown down or set on fire; yea, and though the Amorites are a stately race, like the people of the far north or as the Ethiopians, yet I have known armies, greater and taller, who were but as wheat before the sickle of Egypt, to wit, the Achæans, Trojans and Sardians, who were allied with the kings of the Hittites. Therefore my report shall be: "Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it."'

I much admired the resolute bearing of the two men, nor have I ever met with any who inspired me so profoundly with respect for their manly virtue and lofty piety. We accompanied them several days, and I had many discussions with them upon their religious beliefs and practices.

'If ye are willing to cast in your lot with us,' said Oshea, 'come to us when we have conquered the land, and we will do you good and give you each a portion among our tribes, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.'

I smiled at the sublime simplicity of this man's faith, and perhaps my looks, even more than my words, expressed some derision of the offer. That a rude and lately enslaved people, who had no temple

nor any God of world-wide renown, and who hardly even knew letters, had something better to offer us than our own people, who had ancient temples of which the world is proud, and who had taught arts and learning to all other nations for thousands of years, seemed at the time to be childish fatuity; but, in reply to my objections, he said:

'You believe that the knowledge of God would be more worthy of acceptance if it came through the lips of a king of Babylon rather than those of a Midianite shepherd. Would a prisoner despise the sunlight because it came through a wooden lattice rather than through a golden window, or would a drowning man refuse to grasp a shepherd's staff that is held out to him because it is not a royal sceptre? I trow not. Whatever may be the case with false gods and demons, the true God, the holy One, rather chooses to speak by the purest in heart, however humble in station these may be, than by the loftiest and most learned who do not walk straight in the pathway of the light.'

'You call the gods of other people false deities, and your own God the only true One: that is quite natural,' said I. 'A mother thinks her own children the finest in all the world, and I have seen an Arabian shepherd who believed the scenery of his own district unrivalled in beauty, though it was mostly sandy plain and scorched rock. What excellence, then, has your religion to show that others have not?'

'Other religions do not go against the stream of natural inclination in man, rebuking all transgres-

sion in priest and people alike, nor do they demand absolute purity of heart and life.'

'Surely,' I exclaimed, 'you, who have lived in Egypt, must know how every Egyptian is bound by his religious faith to obey righteousness and become an embodiment of the truth, and that he requires to declare before Osiris, the judge, "I am pure," ere he obtains immortal life in Amenti among the spirits made perfect.'

'The Egyptian is not without rays of light from on high,' said Oshea; 'yet has he too little light to know how high is the purity demanded by the Supreme God, the Judge of men, and how far he himself comes short of it. On whose authority does he declare himself pure? Certainly not on that of the judge who is enthroned in the breast of men. If he listened to that, he would bewail his sins, as even ye in Chaldea are said to do; but the dying Egyptian must, in the last resort, trust for purity to priestly rites and the magical incantations of the Book of the Dead. But knowest thou not what impurities are cloaked by the Egyptian religion, and practised as part of their worship by the priests themselves, as those of the god Ammon at Thebes? Can a religion that tolerates such things produce purity of heart in the worshipper, and can it proceed from a pure and holy God?'

'But is what you call purity,' said I, 'so divine as you suppose? Is not our nature a mirror of the source whence it has sprung? and must not the Supreme God, whom you profess to worship, look

with kindly indulgence upon all the propensities He has given us?'

'Yea, we admit,' said he, 'that the voice of God is in our nature, even in the holy of holies of the heart, wherein conscience sits enthroned, unless, indeed, we have by sin dethroned it. Whenever we truly listen to the voice of conscience, and whenever conscience truly speaks, it tells us that there are walls which we may not overpass without our peril, and that there are propensities that must be reined in and governed by conscience, just as the horses must obey and be controlled by the charioteer. Have you not heard an inner voice declare that certain things taught in your own religion are not right, and cannot be divine?'

At this I was dumb, knowing what debasing rites were practised in Chaldea in connection with the worship of Mylitta and Bel.

'The gods of other religions,' said he, 'are feared, not because they are good, but because they are powerful and capricious and cruel. Our God is the God of light, whose ways are supremely straight and right, and yet He is pitiful and of tender mercy towards the penitent. This is the proclamation of His name and character to His servant Moses when He revealed Himself upon Mount Sinai: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."'

Many other things did he say, until there arose clear

in my mind the conception of One whom I had darkly groped after—nay, whom I seemed to have met unrecognized at many points and in many experiences of my own life—One who combined the inflexible integrity and governing authority of my father with the tender, compassionate love of my mother, and who as a Father seeks to draw near and dwell with men, and so regulate their lives that they may be for ever blessed in Him alone. Yet, as Oshea went on to describe the lofty purity of this God, His terrible hatred of sin, and the exacting nature of the rites required for atonement and purification, the service of such a divinity seemed to debar men from many joys and to be a burden too heavy for weak mortals; but chiefly was I prejudiced against it as coming from a people so obscure and despicable. Also I objected to the cruelty to be inflicted upon the Canaanites in the threatened dispossession of their native land and their supplanting by the alien Hebrew race.

'The God who is the Maker of the earth,' said Oshea, 'spake of old to our forefathers, and gave this land to them and to their seed for a possession. This people, who now occupy it, have forfeited their heritage by their wickedness, which they are spreading amid the surrounding nations. It is meet that the light of holiness and truth should be planted in this land which lies at the very centre of the nations of the earth. And as for the hardship of driving out the innocent with the guilty, I am persuaded that some good will come of it, even to themselves, for it is the part of the Most High God to temper

severity with unexpected mercy, and to bring light out of thick darkness.'

I recalled these words in after-years when I saw the crowds of fugitive Canaanites who were going forth as emigrants to the far west;* and I doubt not but the world has been immensely bettered by the conquest of Canaan by Joshua: the Canaanites themselves have been planted in regions where their former corrupt morals will yield to the industry they will require to display; the Hebrews have been planted in a fertile land which their Egyptian training enables them carefully to till, and which their stern morality will purify; and the currents of corrupt influence which were flowing freely from this land to surrounding countries have been greatly checked.

We accompanied the men several days till we reached the town of Megiddo, and their parting words to us were: 'Remember that our God alone is the supreme and living God, and if ye will return and worship Him with us you will find an open door of welcome; but if not, go in peace, and may the blessing of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel rest upon you for your kindness to us His servants.'

Journal Continued.

Sixteenth day of Tabit (*December*).—This day is the Sabbath, and I have sought to remember my faults which have brought so many calamities upon my head. I have sought to reckon the sum of them

* See Appendix, Note K.

before the light of Samas, the judge. They are more than I can number; yea, innumerable are those which are hidden from myself. To which of the great gods shall I appeal? I will come before thee, O Ilu! the supreme, the hidden one! with the voice of my groaning: my cry to thee shall be as the turtle-dove. I implore thy forgiveness as a child that returns in penitence to his mother.

'O God, my creator,
Sustain the breath of my mouth.
O Lord of light,
Keep me from sinking down
Into the raging waves that would engulf me.
Lord, my transgressions are many,
Great are my sins.
The Lord in his fierce anger hath laid his wrath upon me;
God, in the severity of his heart, hath laid his hand upon me;
He hath cast himself upon me; he hath wrought me sore distress.
I lay myself upon the ground. There is none to take me by the hand.
He that fears not God shall be crushed as the reed.
He that fears not God shall see his strength melt away.
As a star of the sky shall he lose his lustre;
He shall flee away as the vapours and the clouds.'*

* See Appendix, Note L.

CHAPTER V.

AMONG THE PHŒNICIANS.

FROM this time I date the turning-point in the tide of my fortunes. Hitherto, almost ever since I escaped from Dilmon, I had been either a slave or a fugitive, weary and hungry, and ofttimes all but in despair. Now I became my own master, and my star was once more in the ascendant.

Some inward voice has at times asked me if this change of fortune had naught to do with my befriending, even so slightly, those servants of El-elion, who has said of His people, whoso blesseth them shall be blessed; but whoso toucheth them to their hurt, toucheth the apple of His eye.

The town of Megiddo, where we parted with the Hebrew spies, sits on a high fortified hill midway between the towns of Urusalim and Tyre, and is famous as the scene of the great battle in which Tothmes III., King of Egypt, defeated the combined hosts of the Hittites and Canaanites in the year after the death of his sister, Queen Hatasu. Here I met with a Babylonian merchant named Sinrab,

who had settled in the town, not so much on account of its size and importance, for it is more a garrison town than a mercantile city, as on account of its central position. This merchant willingly received me as a countryman, and I became at first his scribe, and latterly a teacher of the cuneiform writing of Babylon, which was at that time much in vogue among the chiefs of Canaan.

I remained at Megiddo until news arrived that the Hebrew people under the leadership of Oshea had crossed the Jordan and had begun a war of extermination against the Canaanites. When I told Sinrab of what I knew of this people and their leader, he deemed it prudent to remove his goods to the city of Sidon in the land of Phœnicia, and I resolved to accompany him. I went to inform my friend Milzar of this decision, and to ask if he wished to accompany us; but, to my great surprise, he gave me to know that he meant to go and cast in his lot with the children of Israel.

'For,' said he, 'I have been much troubled in conscience by day and in visions of the night by the thought of the life I have been living and the gods I have been worshipping. I have been led,' said he, 'to inquire much into the history of the Hebrews, and the more I have done so, the more am I convinced that the Supreme God has verily revealed Himself to that people through His prophet Moses. Nor do I wonder that He has at length interposed at a time when the ancient faith of the children of Shem has become degenerate and awfully corrupt. Look how licentious rites have been mul-

tiplied in this and the neighbouring lands through the worship of Baal and Astarte and Adonis; how the gardens and groves of Adonis and Astarte, and the Asherah pillars, the scene of lascivious revelry, are spreading like a moral plague all over the west and through Phœnician commerce to all lands. Never was there a time upon earth when God—if there is one supreme holy God—needed so much to come for the help of the children of light as now, when righteousness seems to be dying out of the earth.'

I was truly sad at heart in bidding farewell to Milzar, who had been as a brother to me, and for a season a certain heaviness weighed upon my spirit, with a vague fear that in thus parting with my friend, and taking a different way, I was turning my back upon the true God and the kingdom of light. However, those dark thoughts erelong vanished after I, in company with Sinrab and his attendants, set out on our journey to Phœnicia. It was a memorable era in my life when I first set foot in that wonderful country, which is the very heart of the world's commercial life by land and sea. We passed the base of Mount Carmel, where we came in sight of the great western sea, on which were vessels of all sizes passing to and from the harbours of Phœnicia. We passed the river Belus, near Accho, and Sinrab pointed out to me the spot near the sea-shore where the Phœnician merchants in old times made the discovery of glass through the accidental fusion of the soda which they had placed by their fire with the fine sand of the place. We next ascended by a

difficult zigzag path the rocky staircase called the Ladder of the Tyrians. Soon we entered upon a scene of amazing activity and teeming life. On our right hand rose the lofty slopes of Lebanon, of which the Syrians say that it bears winter on its summit, spring on its shoulders, autumn in its lap, and summer at its feet. Above us rose the famous cedar and pine forests of Lebanon which have supplied all the world with timber for temples, even from the exceedingly ancient days, when Gudea, King of Accad, who ruled the world from the upper to the nether sea, caused mighty cedars of Amanus to be transported to Ur for the building of the temple of Ningirsu. To our left lay the Great Sea, and before us was a fertile strip of plain bearing stately palm-trees, olives and mulberries. On the roads we passed caravans of merchandise, trucks of timber, and immense blocks of stone, which were being conveyed to the harbours. We passed the city of Tyre, with its island opposite, on which stands the renowned temple of Bel-Melkarth, and which was teeming with builders laying mighty foundations and substructions of walls and streets. Here is the reputed cradle of navigation, where in the ancient days Uso, brother of King Samemrum, first ventured out upon the deep, and steered his way upon a tree-trunk to island Tyre.

I was amazed by the wonderful scene of activity I witnessed in this small corner of the earth. Lying under the shadow of Lebanon, with its exhaustless forests of the finest timber, and looking out upon the great western sea, with its open pathway to new

and unexplored countries, Akharru stretches forth one hand to grasp the commerce of Egypt, while with the other she lays hold of the merchandise of the Hamathites and of Naharaim.

As we passed the city of Tyre the sea swarmed, in the golden light of the setting sun, with ships of many-coloured sails and of all sizes, from the great Egyptian corn-gaval to the tiniest fishing-craft which searched after the purple shell around the rocks. Here were vessels arriving and vessels setting forth, vessels loading and unloading, and vessels being built. In the narrow and crowded streets of the cities you jostle foreigners from all countries, and hear a Babel of languages. You meet thick-set, bearded Assyrians, and tall, fair-haired Aryan Elamites; yellow-skinned Egyptians and dark, woolly-haired negroes; warlike Achæans and Trojans, and gigantic fair-haired barbarians from further north.

This is the busy centre of the world's commerce, whose lines, like a spider's web, make a network over all lands and seas. The bold Phœnician mariners plant their settlements upon all shores through greed of gain, yet they are also spreading a knowledge of arts and letters over the earth. A hard, eager look is upon all faces; it is a people given up to the pursuit of wealth as the minister and means of pleasure. Their gold and silver, their gems and vases, their glass and ivory and slave-girls, what are they but passports to regal banquets, Astarte temples, and groves of pleasure?

On reaching Sidon I began business in partnership with Sinrab, partly in Babylonian goods brought

by caravans from the east, and partly in Tyrian purple which we sent by way of Hamath to Naharaim.

I had not been long a sojourner in Phœnicia, ere I was caught by the spirit of that eager, enterprising and pleasure-loving people as by a mighty spell. That atmosphere of keen commercial rivalry acted like a fever in my veins, and all those awe-inspiring thoughts of a supreme God of holiness which had awakened within me, first through intercourse with Abilbel on his lonely island, and then through contact with the two Hebrews, all my aspirations after further knowledge of the way to a happy immortality, and all my resolves to live a better life, faded and vanished, and I became a worshipper in the temples of Baal and Astarte. I did not, indeed, visit the groves of Adonis and Astarte at the time of the great festivals, or give the reins to passion like my neighbours. Yet I did not refrain from following the multitude because of any real difference of principle; but my astute old partner, Sinrab, would caution me on this wise:

'Beware of the allurements of Astarte; for so soon as I see a rival merchant yielding to these, I do not fear him as a competitor: his mental fibre is softened; his zeal in business is relaxed.'

Therefore I became very frugal, and found the advantage of that mode of living, which I would recommend to all young men who are ambitious to excel in any line. Often my meals would consist of a little bread and figs, supplemented with some dried tunny-fish imported from the coast of Troy. By this

means my head was kept clear and my nerves steady, and I was able to continue for twelve hours a day in intense application to business. After a year or two had elapsed, and our sphere of commercial dealings had extended, I was brought much in contact with traders and seafaring men from distant lands. I became interested in their descriptions and stories of foreign countries, and somewhat of my old spirit of adventure revived. My partner sometimes discussed with me the possibility of establishing a connection with the Greek mainland, and it was agreed between us that, after the lapse of a year or two, if the business prospered, I should go off on an exploring expedition for that purpose. I began, therefore, to purchase charts of foreign lands, and cultivated the society of seafaring men; also I studied the art of navigation, and what pertained to the management of ships.

One day I had been at a merchant's storehouse at the harbour for the transaction of business, after which we had some wine in company with two sea-captains, who had lately returned from a voyage. Whilst they were recounting their experiences, a stranger entered who was hailed by them with eagerness, and invited to share in our conviviality. This man impressed me at once by his appearance: barely of middle age, bronzed and sun-tanned like a Nubian, of middle height, spare of frame, but broad-shouldered, there was a look of bold alertness about him that bespoke one accustomed to command, and undaunted in the presence of dangers. I was much taken by the extent of his information and the

shrewdness of his remarks. I found that he knew all the great western sea, even to Tarshish and Gadir (Cadiz) in the utmost west. He was more reticent in regard to his experiences than the others, and I saw that he was much better informed, and able to put them right upon many points. The talk finally turned upon the form of the earth, the extent of the great earth-surrounding stream, the locality of the islands of the Blessed Immortals, and the exact spot where the sun goes down into the underworld; and this man, whose name, as I learnt, was Yakin, a Tyrian, declared, in his resolute manner, that the earth-surrounding water was just a vast ocean set with islands and continents, but with no supernatural terrors; and that the sun did not drop into the sea, but passed beyond it. He had himself ventured some way into that outer ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and had seen nothing but a vast plain of water, whose waves of mighty sweep bespoke the vast distance which they had traversed.

Yakin then told a story, which I often pondered afterwards, and which was fateful in its consequences to myself. Once, he said, when sailing with his father on a voyage to Gadir, they met there a renowned old mariner, Tobal, the son of Hiram, who had explored the coasts beyond the Pillars of Hercules to a greater distance than any living man, and who was about to set out on a new and still more extensive exploring expedition. He started with two ships after the storms of the vernal equinox were past, and he was unheard of for the rest of that year. Yakin and his father had meantime gone to Carthada,

which had been recently founded by the Tyrians under Elissa, daughter of King Mattan, and on returning the following summer to Gadir, they found that no news had yet arrived of the fate of Tobal and his ships. But, strange to say, they had not been two days in the harbour of Gadir, when those identical vessels arrived, with sails torn and with broken masts. Tobal himself was very reticent in regard to his experiences, but his vessels contained a most valuable cargo of tin ore, with which, after a short delay in order to receive repairs and provisions, they set out for Phœnicia. Tobal and his ships never reached their native land; for, after having weathered the storms and braved all the perils of the outer sea, they must have succumbed to the storms they encountered on their homeward passage.

I had several talks with Captain Yakin afterwards on the subject of the regions lying beyond the Pillars of Hercules; and I saw that he was likely at some future time to set forth himself on a voyage of discovery into those seas, and there sprang up in my mind a great desire to accompany him. I found he was proposing to go the following year to the coasts of Greece, and I began to make arrangements for accompanying him. But now, in view of that voyage, the longing came upon me first to revisit my native land and learn of the welfare of my parents and friends.

It was the month of Tammuz when I resolved to set out on my homeward journey. It is in that month that the famous festival of the death of Adonis is celebrated by the maidens of Phœnicia on

the banks of the Adonis River, which becomes blood-red in commemoration of the death of Tammuz; and among the groves by the temple of Astarte near that river, the maidens of Phœnicia hold a seven days' festival to bewail the death of Tammuz, and there they make it part of the solemnity to give themselves up to license. As my business led me round by the city of Gebal, I resolved to attend this festival and witness those strange rites which were celebrated with such pomp as to be famous through the whole world.

But as I lay asleep in my lodging in the city of Gebal on the eve of my setting out for the gardens of Adonis, a vision of the night-watches disturbed my slumbers, and so vivid was the dread impression it made upon me that the memory of it remains fresh until this day. Methought, as I was on my way to the Adonis festival, whilst the land was still in darkness and awaiting the rising of the moon, I met Milzar, who was arrayed in shining, heavenly armour, and with a glittering sword in his hand; and he besought me to cast in my lot with the people of the One God, who was calling upon all men to take sides, and who was coming ere long to judge the world and separate the righteous from the wicked. But I turned away my face from him, for I was not prepared to give up the pleasures of time for those that were still far off in the serene heaven of Anu. Soon I began to hear cries of wailing, and, as I listened to make out the cry of the women, 'O Adon! Alas for his beauty!' methought the voices were not those of lascivious and feigned lamentation, but of

terror which passed over all the land like the waves of a universal deluge of sorrow. And suddenly a great light shone down ; but, instead of the rising moon, I beheld a dazzling throne with a rainbow ring of white spirits round it, so far aloft that the sight was full of dread. Then straightway there was revealed in me an awful sense of the purity of the unseen realm where El-elion sits enthroned. What was the appearance of the One who sat upon the throne I cannot tell, for His countenance was too terrible in its brightness to be looked upon. Then swift messengers swooped down like eagles to all the winds of heaven, and passed over the gleaming seas and the awakened earth, crying to the living and dead to gather together, for the Judge was about to set His throne in the earth, and the great day of eternal decision was come. When the judgment-throne came down and was set upon the earth, I and all mankind were seized by an irresistible angelic power, and carried into the awful splendour that beamed from the face of God, and made all things manifest in their true colours. Just when it was my turn to be summoned before the tribunal to receive the sentence which should fix my eternal fate, I awoke trembling, and could sleep no more.

In the morning, so heavily did the impression of this vision weigh upon my spirit that I was in no mood for visiting the groves of Adonis, but I began instead to make preparations for setting out on my journey to Babylon. Along with a merchant of my acquaintance, who was about to set out on the same journey, I made up a large caravan of camels and

attendants, meaning to cross the desert from Khadesh to Carchemish, and then send our goods from the port of Thipsakh in the ships of the Gerrhaim, who traded up and down the Euphrates.

Journal Continued.

Twenty-eighth day of Tabit (December).—The cold is still intense, the day dark and sunless. If this goes on the sun will depart altogether for a season, and then I shall be in the darkness of the tomb. I was only able to write upon a tablet for an hour or two at mid-day. Nevertheless, my heart grasps at hope as a drowning man clutches at a twig. Last night I was startled out of an unquiet sleep by what appeared to be some voice whispering in my cell. I repeated the Chaldean charm against night demons, and lay awake for some time in a shiver of affright; but, hearing nothing further, I supposed that it was only a dream, and I fell asleep once more. But the morning had a greater surprise in store for me, for underneath the loophole of my cell I found faggots of firewood, a vase of flour, a jar of water, and a mat of sheepskin. These had evidently been thrust in at the narrow opening; and I wept tears of gladness at the sight, and thanked by name all the gods I knew, lest I should miss out the right one. I have been in comfort all day, and have been ceaselessly questioning as to what hand could have been so stretched out to help in the dead of night; but the mystery is still dark as midnight to my mind.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW I MET ARIAC.

I NOW open a new page in the volume of my history and inscribe on it the name of Ariac. My meeting with him seemed a small matter at the time, but bore great issues for my future destiny. It was as if a fallen leaf, torn from some strange foreign tree, and blown eastward by the storm of war, had been wafted across my path and I picked it up carelessly — not knowing that on it was inscribed my destiny in unknown characters, which must be spelt slowly and painfully out for many days after. How strange is it that man, whose eyes are set to look before him in the outer world, has no eyes to look forward to his coming destiny, but goes blindly onward to meet it, powerless to hasten it if it be good, helpless to avert it if it be evil!

On our way to Babylon we had deemed it wise to take a more southerly route than the ordinary one, which led through the theatre of a war which was waged at that time between Rimmon-Nirari, the

powerful monarch of Assyria, and Kita-sir, King of the Hittites. At one point we crossed a path where a party of Hittites, retreating westward, had passed a few hours before. Beside this path we found a tall young man lying apparently dead; but, on closer examination, I noticed that some life still remained in him. My partner wished to leave him to his fate, since any attempt to assist him threatened to involve us in needless delay; but, having myself had much experience of hardship in youth, I felt my heart softened towards a fellow-creature who was thus left to die alone and unfriended.

I well knew what mercy would be shown this stranger if he fell into the hand of his enemies. I once heard my father say, in referring to his experiences in the war against Asshur:

'If you have a comrade who falls wounded in war against the Assyrian—be he your own brother or best friend—kill him at once, rather than that he should fall into the enemy's hand, to be flayed alive and slowly tortured to death by flies.'

I moistened the lips of the sick man with water from my own flask, and tried to pour some of it into his mouth, at which he turned towards me with a feeble look of surprise and gratitude. The mid-day hour was approaching, and we retired to the shadow of some neighbouring rocks, carrying with us the sick stranger. I there ministered to him, and applied to him the remedies I had with me which appeared to suit his case.

As our party were somewhat in need of rest after a long fatiguing journey of many days, we resolved to

encamp at that spot until the following day, and I employed all the medical skill which I and the other members of the party possessed in seeking to relieve the sufferer.

As the evening drew on, hearing the call of the herdsmen in the distance as they were collecting their herds for the night, and learning that a nomad tribe was encamped in the neighbourhood, I despatched some of our young men to the sheikh with a present, requesting in return a supply of milk for our party. This having been sent, I gave the sick man some of it, and to my surprise he sat up and drank with avidity, and from that hour he showed quite marvellous tokens of amendment.

This stranger became an object of great interest to me. Evidently, from his manner and appearance, he belonged to no servile class, but must have sprung from those accustomed to command; nor was he of the uncomely race of the Hittites, but rather of some northern people. Though in face he was browned by the sun, the rest of his skin was of a snowy whiteness, and I supposed that he must have belonged to the fairer part of the Achæan or Teucrian race, if he was not rather of the Kimmerian stock from the remote north. I forebore, however, to question him much until the next day, part of which we still passed at the same resting-place. He was a very tall youth, not much over twenty years of age, and, from the rapid recovery he made, was evidently of a vigorous constitution. He had yellow hair and blue eyes, whose clear open expression reminded me of the blue sea or the firmament in calm spring weather.

There was a grave manliness in the expression of his features in repose, which was in strong contrast with the fiery animation of his looks when excited. I was singularly drawn to this youth—partly out of compassion, and partly because I was ever eager to converse with foreigners and gather information about distant countries. I found that he was only imperfectly acquainted with the Hittite speech; but I was able to talk with him through a dialect of the Achæan speech, though neither was that his native language.

Gradually I drew from him some details as to his origin and history. His name, he told me, was Ariac, and he belonged to a mountain-land called Alpia, lying far to the north and west of the Achæans. His father was a chieftain among a warlike people who dwelt on the shore of a great lake called Accron. His country was visited at times by merchants from the south carrying goods which had come from southern lands in ships of the Leleges, Pelasgi and Phœnicians. From one of those merchants, named Ambrax, he had acquired a knowledge of other lands, and had imbibed a great desire to visit them in order to know their arts and customs. He and a brother named Leonor had prevailed upon their father to allow them to accompany Ambrax on one of his voyages to the shores of Greece and to other countries. The fertile southern lands have ever a strong attraction for the warlike peoples of the north, and I have since found their chiefs are eager to learn what are the most attractive regions and convenient routes for southern invasion;

and it was in some sort in the character of spies that Ariac and his brother Leonor had set out upon their great tour—of this latter object, however, he did not inform me at this time. They had tarried for a short time at the mouth of a great river, the Eridan, where was a Lelegian trading settlement; then they had set sail for Argos, in Greece; and after spending several months among the Achæans, they had visited the island of Crete, whence they intended to set out for Phœnicia and Egypt. On their voyage towards Sidon the vessel had been seized by Carian pirates, who divided the plunder between two ships, one of which set sail for the coast of the Teucri, and the other, which carried Ariac, sailed for the coast of the Hittites. Here he was sold as a slave and taken to Hamath, where he came into the hands of Khita-sir, King of the Hittites. He mourned the sad fate of his brother, who had been separated from him, and was probably at that time a slave among the Teucri.

A strong bond of friendship sprang up between me and the young man. According to my usual custom in meeting with foreigners, I immediately set about the task of learning his native language, which I found more to resemble the Achæan than any other language which I knew. This I did, not because of much prospective advantage which was likely to be gained thereby, though in my character of merchant I had often found it useful to have picked up fragments of even barbarous tongues, but it was an agreeable pastime for me to try how quickly I could master a new language by means of

a method of my own invention. When I told Ariac of my projected voyage to the Grecian coast his eyes kindled in a wistful manner, and he became grave and thoughtful; and as we advanced in the direction of Babylon he grew so strangely melancholy and dreamy that I began to question him much on the subject, and at length I discovered that he feared I meant to sell him to slavery in the great city, even as the Carian pirates had sold him at Hamath. On hearing this I broke into hearty laughter, and clapping him on the shoulder, I chid him for his unworthy suspicions, telling him that I had just as much intention of selling my own brother for a slave as him.

'For, indeed,' said I, in a more serious mood, 'my soul has become knit to you in this time of your distress as if you were my brother. You shall, indeed, go with me to Babylon and see the wonders of that great city, but you shall also return with me, and I shall accompany you part of your way homewards; how far I shall go the gods alone know as yet. But so long as we are to be together shall we not be as brothers to one another? for, from the first day I met you, I felt some mysterious bond attaching me to you as though we two had some secret element of kinship.'

Then Ariac fell upon my neck and wept for gladness and for gratitude, and from that day we two have regarded ourselves as if we were brethren—the sons of the same mother.

We arrived at length in Babylon, and passed onwards to the city of Ur, when to my grief I found

that my father had gone to the mansions of the dead, and that I was to see his face no more. Wherefore I mourned for him thirty days, whilst residing with my sister, who was now married. Now that I had few ties binding me to my native country I proposed the more speedily to set out on my projected travels; but now I must describe an event which gave a new colour to my enterprise, and which has, indeed, had the weightiest issues upon my career.

At this period a great danger was threatening my native land from the growing and ever-advancing power of Assyria, whose warlike monarch, after having chastised the Hittites, was now turning his arms against our near neighbours and allies, the Gutians, Lulumites and Cassites. This king, Rimmon-Nirari, was also threatening to cut off the supply of bronze weapons from Babylon by concluding a treaty with the Sidonians, whereby all the tin brought by them from Tarshish which did not go to the Egyptian market should be conveyed to Assyria. There was still an abundant supply of copper coming from Cyprus, Maganna, and other quarters; but the amount of tin brought from beyond eastern Elam* by the Cushite merchants was growing less every year, whilst the Assyrians intercepted the limited provision of that metal which used to come from Iberia, north of the country of the Namru (Kurds). One evening, when I chanced to be in Babylon with Ariac, one of my friends

* Probably from the Paropamisus, where, according to Strabo, tin was obtained.

happened to show me specimens of tin from various countries. My attendant Ariac having examined these, mentioned that the people of his native country knew of an island called Albion, lying in the western ocean beyond Tarshish, in which the rocks were said to be formed of tin, and he himself had known a native of that land who had sojourned for a time among the lake people, and was wont to say that in his country a white metal was as plentiful as the stones of the earth. This, I thought, could be nothing else than *kasdur*, or tin, seeing that it is a product of Tarshish and the lands of the far west; and the idea dawned upon me that if the Tyrian merchants would undertake the enterprise of opening a trade route between Albion and Phœnicia there might be a constant supply of bronze for Babylonia. Then the spirit of adventure and the thirst for foreign travel returned to me with power. I burned with desire to set out in quest of that land and so gratify my passion for foreign discovery, and at the same time be a benefactor to my country. Immediately I thought of the bold Tyrian captain, Yakin, whom I had met in Sidon. To him I resolved to apply; for if I could only be happy enough to find him in his native town he was of all men the most likely to undertake and carry through such an enterprise.

I was as one who has tasted the first draught of a prosperous vintage, and that evening I said to Ariac:

'You are often vaunting to me the beauty of the fair-faced daughters of your country—what if I go

and see them with my own eyes and decide for myself?'

He looked to see if I were not in jest, and then on hearing of my project his joy knew no bounds. He wished to have me set out at once. He declared that a Phœnician ship could take us within sight of the mountains of his native country. Thence he declared—too rashly, as I have found to my cost—that the journey to the shore of the western ocean could easily be accomplished, after which, with a fair wind, we could be carried over to the island of Albion in two days at most.

The fame of my proposed expedition was quickly wafted throughout Accad and Sumir, and the king himself looked favourably upon it. Before setting out on my journey I was called into the palace of the great king, who gave me a royal commission and also letters for the various viceroys who governed the provinces beyond the river through which I must pass. Also he gave me letters for the princes of Phœnicia and for other kings who ruled in the regions beyond. The one which I carried with me for the Prince of Tyre ran thus:

'Merodach-Baladan, the glorious prince, the king of multitudes, the chief of kings, the sun of the countries of Sumir and Accad, Chaldea and Cassia, to Baal-merom, Prince of Tyre, the beautiful mistress of the western sea, sends friendship. This is to remind you of the ancient bond uniting the cities of Akharri (Phœnicia)* and Sumir. Ye

* See Appendix, Note M.

are our brethren sprung of old from the shores of the Chaldean Sea. Ye are worshippers of the same gods as we; for ye have carried the worship of El and of Bel and of Istar to the shores of the west. Ye have transplanted to the western lands the arts taught to our fathers in primeval times by Ea, the lord of the abyss and the creator of the earth; and ye have made a new Tyre and Arvad in the far west. My royal ancestors from of old bore the title of "Father and Protector of Akharri," and ye ofttimes supplied them with timber from your lordly forests when prosecuting their pious labours of building the temples of their gods.

'I have sent this by the hand of Simran, the son of Ubal, who seeks a passage in one of your vessels to help him on his way to discover new mines of kasdur in the far-distant tin-producing island of the west named Albion. Now, if there shall be found any sea-captain bold enough to accompany him in his quest, and who shall discover a sea-passage to the islands of tin, I, Merodach-Baladan, promise to reward him on his return with a sum of three hundred maneh' (£2,700), 'the same as I have also promised to my servant Simran.

'This also will fall out to the advantage of the men of Tyre, for it will open for you one of the greatest branches of your commerce. If ye succeed in procuring supplies of western tin, my kingdom will undertake to purchase from you to the weight of at least 6,000 talents of kasdur every year. This would also be a bond of alliance between us against the rapacious Assyrian, who will infallibly break in

upon you like a devastating tempest unless his progress is stayed.

'Babylon, the month Sabat, twenty-third day, tenth year of my reign.

'Merodach-Baladan, King of Babylon, King of nations.'

When we arrived in Phœnicia we found that country in great commotion. Here and there along the coast, in the neighbourhood of the chief seaports, crowds of fugitive Canaanites were encamped; for the Hebrews, under the leadership of Hoshea, had now seized upon the greater part of the land of Canaan, and were exterminating or driving out the inhabitants. These were now waiting to be conveyed in emigrant ships to Libya and Tarshish and remote islands in the utmost west, and there was a great wailing of women and execration of men against the Hebrew robbers.

At first I despaired of finding Yakin and his ships still at Tyre; but by great good fortune he had not yet set sail, though his ships were in the act of being loaded for a voyage to the coasts of Mæonia and Achaia. I had already placed my commission from Babylon in the hands of the rulers of the Tyrians; and when I explained to Yakin the object of my proposed journey, the dark eyes of the bold seaman lit up, and he shook his shaggy locks as he pondered the project for a time in silence.

'Comrade,' he exclaimed at length, seizing my hand, 'you have named an enterprise that is wholly to my mind, and one upon which I have often

thought. This is a great and formidable voyage; but I am assured it is possible. At present I am lading for the town of Iluna and the Grecian coast; but after that I shall be free to enter upon this undertaking, and no mariner who steers by the polar star will enter upon it more heartily than I. Whilst I proceed with two vessels by way of Gadir and the pillars of Bel, another of our ships, commanded by my brother Hanan, will convey you along the Hesperian coast to the mouth of the Eridan River. Thence your barbarian friend will guide you to his native land, where dwell the lake-people of whom I have heard, and who do some trade with us in copper and bronze. There you may be able to obtain guides to lead you through the unknown regions beyond, and, when you reach the tin-islands, you will either find my ships already there, or you will tarry till we come. If our enterprise succeeds it will make our name great among men to many generations.'

I made careful preparation for this long and hazardous expedition, Yakin having given me much useful advice concerning what to take and how to put it in the most portable form. Ariac and I embarked on board the ship *Asnya*, or *Osprey*, commanded by Yakin himself. We had resolved to proceed with the vessels on their voyage to Troy and the Grecian coast, on my part because I preferred to explore those new regions to remaining inactive at Tyre; and Ariac, because he cherished some faint hope of finding his brother Leonor at Troy. The fleet consisted of six merchantmen, four

of the vessels being of the long-shaped sort called 'susim,' or sea-horses, and two of them being of the round-shaped build called 'gaval,' or tubs. These vessels were built of the cedars of Lebanon and Amanus, and, being of the best Phœnician make, were among the trimmest and most sea-worthy vessels in the world. They were caulked with bitumen, and steered both by sail and oar. The benches of the rowers were ranged along the sides of the ship; the bales of merchandise and cabins were down below, the sailors themselves keeping chiefly to the middle deck, whilst the captain and his friends were usually stationed either at the forecastle deck near the prow, or the quarter-deck near the poop—both of which overlooked the central deck and were furnished with a wooden stairway and balustraded bulwark. Here Ariac and I spent many a pleasant hour, for the captain and we were on very friendly terms. I was able to assist him in his astronomical calculations, and we had many keen discussions touching the constellations, the zodiac, eclipses, and other such matters. The Phœnician mariners steer their vessels by the constellation of the Great Bear, but chiefly by the Polar star, which they call Eshman, from the name of one of their Cabir deities.

I ought not to forget that our small fleet was accompanied by one long ship, which was hired to attend us mainly as a defence against pirates, its crew being composed of picked men who had been specially trained to sea warfare; yet all the seamen in the other ships were also provided with weapons

by the captain in time of need, and could handle sword and javelin as well as sail and oar.

Journal Continued.

Eighth day of the month Sabat (*January*).—The weather is not quite so cold as of late; and to-day the sun was shining brightly at mid-day. My unknown night visitor keeps me supplied with firewood, and I have now finished the construction of my chimney, which draws the smoke well. It takes but little fuel to warm the cave; but this fire is of great use in cooking my food, which I do in an earthen jar. I am also sometimes supplied by night with cow's milk, which I welcome as if it were the greatest dainty. I have not yet solved the mystery of the supplies, but fancy at times it must be the heart of a woman which has thus had compassion, for everywhere I have found, even among barbarians, that the heart of woman is more tender and merciful towards the stranger and the oppressed than that of man. Last night, however, I lay awake to watch for my nightly benefactor, and hearing at length a noise, as of someone stealthily thrusting something through the narrow loophole, I hastily rose and looked forth. The night was too dark to see anything clearly; but I dimly saw a figure, which certainly appeared inhuman, and ever since I have been a prey to perplexed and unutterable thoughts.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW LEONOR WAS FOUND IN TROY.

THUS did I set out, at the age of thirty, from the haven of Tyre, upon my great mission. The ocean had ever a mighty charm for me, and as the *Osprey* and her companions spread their wings for flight, and the sea-breeze stirred my hair, my spirit rose as to the note of a trumpet. I wondered what strange discoveries and what unknown shores lay before me. I thought I might even attain the mysterious boundary of the upper and under world, and find out the pathway of the setting sun beyond the Hesperian island with its dragon-guarded fruit.

When we left the walls and turrets of the Phœnician cities behind, and the snowy summits of Lebanon sank behind the wall of blue sea, a pang of sadness wrung my heart as I thought of friends and native land; but the further we advanced on our voyage and set our faces ever westward, my companion Ariac grew gleeful as one who has quaffed new wine, and as he bore a ready hand at rope or

oar among the seamen, he would sing snatches of the barbaric songs he had learnt among his warlike countrymen.

Sky and sea were as pure glass, and the mountains of the island of Gopher (Cyprus), called by the Egyptians Asi, rose up before us in the north-western horizon. This famous and fertile island, which produces abundance of copper and fine timber, has been known to the Babylonians since the ancient days of Sargon, King of Agadé, by whom it was invaded and conquered. It has many cities, such as Salem (Salamis), Hamath and Kition and Paphos, where is a renowned temple built by King Kinyra of Gebal, in honour of Istar, whose worship is spread over the whole island.

Whilst we tarried at Salem, I went, with a party of acquaintances, to climb the mount Idalah, on whose site is a grove consecrated to the goddess of pleasure. On gazing eastward from the summit, one could descry part of the Lebanon range, with the mountain Casius standing like a sentinel opposite to us on the far-distant coast, and I reflected that if a strong eagle were winging his flight thither from the spot whereon we were standing, he would require to take but one other such flight to reach the banks of the Euphrates. As we sat watching the course of the Phœnician ships, which were coming and going between Cyprus and the Phœnician ports, a gay company of the votaries of Istar, consisting of young girls accompanied by a middle-aged priestess, who had been on a visit to the mountain, approached in festive array, and, with timbrels in their hands and

with garlands and festoons of flowers hung about them, they formed a circle around us and began to sing and to dance. Most of our party joined them in the dance ; but as for myself, since the days of my abode with the hermit Abilbel, but especially since meeting with the two Hebrew spies, there has always been something within me drawing me back from such scenes, and preventing me from going to such lengths in their revelry as others of my acquaintance. On this occasion the mirth was cut short by an appalling accident which happened to one of the dancers. A young man of Syrian Hamath, having partaken too freely of Cyprian wine from a siren's flask, stumbled upon the brink of a precipice, and, falling over, was mangled and killed upon the rocks beneath.

I took advantage of my sojourn in Cyprus to make myself acquainted with the details of Phœnician mining, such as the tools they employed, and their methods of sinking their shafts and of smelting and working the copper ore. They frequently bore their perpendicular shafts to a great depth into the solid rock, and thence, according to the direction of the veins of metal, they form horizontal galleries, which they strengthen with walls and arches. Air-shafts are opened here and there, and water-conduits are employed to convey the water to lower levels. Not far from the mines there is usually a settlement composed of *zarephas*, or smelting-huts, whither the ore is conveyed to be subjected to the heat of the *tannur*, or charcoal furnace, and to be afterwards crushed in mills turned by water-power. The water

used for this purpose is often brought from a great distance in the mountains, where reservoirs are employed to gather it at the sources. When the ore has been crushed to a paste, it is then sifted and the pure metal separated from its stony matrix, to be afterwards mixed with tin imported from Eastern and Western Iberia. In the neighbouring towns are forges and workshops, where warlike weapons and implements of peaceful industry are fashioned for exportation to the surrounding countries. Here the Phœnician navigators obtain one of the staple articles of their commerce which finds a ready market in all lands, and which even the barbarians of the far North and West eagerly welcome, while they cast aside their weapons of polished stone for those of bronze.

On the fifth day of the month Airu (April) our ships left the harbour of Paphos, and, wafted by a favouring breeze, sped on towards the isles of Javan. Within four days we sighted the large and fertile island of Rhodes, with its dark pine-clad mountains and fine havens, where the Phœnicians have several settlements. We paused at the town of Jalysu only to take in water and do a little traffic with the inhabitants; thence we passed on into the Grecian Archipelago, where the sea is studded with islands numerous as the tents of Ishmael upon a fertile plain of Edom (Tennu). At that season of spring flowers and fresh vine-tendrils I was enchanted with the appearance of those islands, some of which are rocky and mountainous, and others more level and fertile; and as we coasted along, slowly because of

the calm that frequently prevailed, we were sometimes so close to the land as to hold converse with the islanders who stood on the shore or fed their flocks on the heights. Sometimes these half-naked barbarians would row out to barter with us, when I was struck by the handsome athletic forms of many of the men, and the fair complexion of many of the women. In this beautiful archipelago, with its cool and pleasant breezes, and its rippling waves which broke rhythmically in the fairy coves, we had left behind us the cedar and palm, and were now in a region of laurels and myrtles and vines. Everything seemed new and strange to me; man and nature had assumed what I called a Western appearance, and I could almost fancy those were the Hesperian islands to which the shades of the blessed immortals are ferried. The mariners told me stories of wonderful supernatural beings who haunted those shores, and as we occasionally spied upon some scarped promontory a herdsman in his shaggy coat piping upon his syrinx, one could almost fancy it was one of the satyrs or the god Pan himself; or, again, when, in passing some sheltered cove, we caught sight of the gleaming forms of sportive virgins, one could fancy these were some of the nymphs and nereids of popular belief; but quickly they would disappear, with warning shriek and hasty scampering, in salutary terror of the Phœnician sailors.

From time to time we would descry a white lighthouse tower or some pillar of Bel reared on a jutting point, generally near the mouth of a stream or river, telling us that a Phœnician Meguma, or trading

station, was near at hand; and often we touched at such places to take in food or water, or to exchange goods. In course of our voyaging about those coasts, I observed that two things usually followed in the wake of Phœnician commerce—to wit, the spread of Eastern arts and letters and the worship of Astarte. It is not in vain that these islanders relate how Aphrodite rose from the sea-foam; but that foam was left by the wake of the ships of Phœnicia.

Sometimes vessels from the Mæonian coast dogged us suspiciously, but never in numbers strong enough to attempt any harm. It appeared that pirate ships were unusually plentiful in those seas that year, and the cause of this we learnt on reaching the island of Thera. The sea-power of the Achæans had been diminished among the islands because their war-ships and the flower of their fighting men were away on a hostile expedition against Troy, the very place which was the destination of our voyage. This was disquieting news to the captains, most of whom gave their voice against our proceeding towards the capital of the Teucri, since the army of the Greeks would be a barrier to our reaching the city, if, indeed, Troy had not fallen by that time into their hands; in any case, we should run the risk of losing our merchandise at the hands of the Greeks, who were never on too friendly terms with Phœnician merchants. But Yakin, our leader, firmly maintained his opinion that we should push forward and seek some anchorage in a sheltered haven at a safe distance from the Grecian army. Thence we might

send messengers to negotiate with the Achæan chiefs, and, as in war-time weapons were always needed, we might find as good a market for our bronze weapons with the Greeks as with the Trojans, and Grecian gold was as good as Trojan. My impression was that the adventurous spirit of Yakin was partially influenced by the desire to learn somewhat of the fortunes of this great war, he himself being well acquainted with both the Teucrians and Achæans.

It was in the sixth week after we left Paphos that we sighted the mountain of Ida in the kingdom of the Teucrians, which reminded me of Mount Lebanon, except that it is not quite so high. As we approached the small island of Tenedos, opposite the plain of Troy, we caught sight of the Grecian war-ships drawn up on the shore, beyond which we perceived the tents of the Achæans ranged in regular order, whilst foot-soldiers and horsemen were moving about upon the plain. We were even able, though dimly, to make out, further inland, the lofty battlements of the citadel of the Teucrians. Away to our left lay the large island of Lemnos, and in front of us, beyond Tenedos, was Imbros, behind which towered the pale purple summit of the lofty island of Samothrace.

Many ships were passing to and fro, and evidently the Greeks were keeping a sharp look-out on the coast in case of reinforcements being landed for the Trojans. A Greek vessel boldly approached us, making signals, which Yakin returned, telling that we were Phœnician merchants desiring to trade in bronze weapons with the Greeks, and wishing to

know if we would be allowed to land in the neighbourhood of the Grecian fleet. This information was conveyed by the look-out vessel to some of its neighbours, who approached us and sent messengers on board, and the result was that we put into a haven on the mainland to the south of Tenedos, and sent a deputation to negotiate with the leaders of the Greeks. Yakin himself headed this mission, and I was allowed to accompany him, for I was eager to see what was going on in the camp. I was naturally interested in all that pertains to warlike affairs, and especially in the case of a great war like this, which might alter the destiny of nations; for these Trojans, with their increasing power, were becoming a menace to the great nations of the East, and were often the confederates of the Hittites, as in the time of the wars of that people with the Egyptians under the great Ramses. My Phœnician associates were perfectly neutral in their sympathies regarding the war, and considered only how best to turn it to some personal profit to themselves. My companion Ariac had become deeply excited on our approaching the land of the Trojans, for he suspected that his brother Leonor had been taken thither and sold as a slave, and he often earnestly discussed with me the question of the practicability of entering Troy and finding his brother.

Our ships had been moored in a sheltered bay at a safe distance from the Grecian fleet, and it took us some hours to reach the camp, where we were received peacefully and led into the presence of Agamemnon, leader of the host, a tall and stately

man, who sat in front of his tent surrounded by a conclave of chiefs. It chanced that there had been a great battle a day or two before, and now there was a truce for the purpose of burying the slain.

I had sufficient acquaintance with the language of the Greeks to be aware that most of the conversation among the chiefs turned upon the events of the recent conflict, and the doughty deeds that each champion had performed. The Trojans had made a sortie from the city in the dim morning twilight, and their attack had been with difficulty repelled, the intensity of the fray being still attested by scarred faces and bandaged arms and heads among the leaders.

Our reception by Agamemnon and his brother-chiefs was not gracious or encouraging. There is a haughty stateliness, a blunt arrogance, and a cold and measured form of address, among those Achæan leaders, which is foreign to our warm Southern blood and apt to be disconcerting. Had it not been for the skill and address of Yakin, who knew that people by long acquaintance, our negotiations would doubtless have failed entirely, and the Greeks would probably have seized our goods and persons.

Addressing us at first in scornful words, the haughty chieftain exclaimed :

'O ye insidious knaves, pilfering Sidonian hucksters and crimps, who come about our coasts with your tawdry wares and cajoling speech, who occupy our mines and decoy our virgins on board your piratical crafts to carry them to the slave-market and the harem, the gods have thrown you into our

hands and given us, on this day of leisure, a precious opportunity of making an example of you and hanging you up as scarecrows to frighten your greedy countrymen from our shores. Can you now show reason why I and these illustrious chiefs should not execute summary vengeance upon you ?'

Some of our number appeared crestfallen at this style of reception, but Yakin retained his wonted coolness and smiling good-humour.

'Yea, O renowned king of men,' he replied, 'I can show in the first place that it would be to the great disadvantage of your host. Us indeed you might hang up on the nearest trees, if trees are not now as scarce on the plain of Troy as we hope, by the might of your arms, your adversaries will soon become; but in that case the weapons you need would be lost to you, for our fleet has withdrawn to a safe distance. In the second place, I know that thou, O king, art a lover of fair play and the maintainer of justice, and it would be unjust that I, who have traded honourably with the Grecian cities for twenty years, should suffer because there are scoundrels among my countrymen, just as among other people—perhaps even among your own, O king!'

I noticed that this ready and politic response seemed to make a favourable impression upon the circle of chiefs; but their president, whose ire must have been kindled that morning upon some other account, sternly proceeded:

'By the sovereign of Olympus, a Phœnician has for once spoken the truth: had there not been

scoundrels in the camp, our foes had not stolen a march upon us the other morning. But how should we accept your own certificate of personal honesty? You Sidonians are renowned liars, as well as thieves; and it is a wise proverb, Take not a man at his own, but his neighbour's, estimate.'

'That test, O king,' said Yakin, 'I am ready to submit to; for I am happy to perceive among these illustrious chiefs some whom I may presume to call my acquaintance. Nor are we of the crafty population of Sidon, as you suppose, but of their more honourable rivals and opponents the Tyrians.'

'This man speaks the truth, O son of Atru,' said a fiery-looking warrior, rising and looking steadfastly at Agamemnon. 'I know him well as a bold seaman, an honest trader, and a generous fellow, who did me a notable service at one time; and I shall feel obliged if, upon my recommendation, you and our brave brethren-in-arms will receive him as the honest fellow he is. My followers, I know, are requiring an addition to their stock of weapons.'

At this there were murmurs of assent among the assembly of chiefs, and Agamemnon himself fell in with the general opinion, though I thought he did so with a bad grace. Messengers were despatched to the ships, which had been left in charge of Tubal, and whilst we waited until the wares should arrive, Yakin, after thanking the chiefs for their courteous agreement to trade with us, added:

'And now, O king and illustrious Achæans, permit me to ask of you a favour in connection with other

wares we carry with us—I mean not weapons for warriors, but ornaments for women.'

This suggestion, which most of the hearers accounted an unwarranted jest, was received with cries of anger and jeers of derision; and one gray-haired chieftain sternly exclaimed:

'Carry back your feminine ornaments to your Tyrian booths, or cast them into the sea; we are here for another purpose than that of adorning women.'

'Yea,' said Agamemnon, 'and if any of our chiefs are fortunate enough to capture among other booty and to carry to our tents any of the bright-eyed daughters of the country, these must bide in patience the day when yonder proud battlements shall be levelled with the dust; then shall they have ornaments poured upon them as from the horn of Amalthea.'

'Yea, far-renowned king,' said Yakin, 'may that day speedily arrive; but, ere it come there are ladies in Troy to be provided for; and, from my past knowledge of them, their city will be in dire distress indeed before they forget their ornaments or lay aside their eagerness for finery.'

'We traffic in other wares,' said the presiding chief, with dark brow, 'than in ear-rings and embroidered slippers for the dames of Troy. There is but one lady in Ilion in whom we have special interest; but if ever she is again bejewelled by Grecian hands, it will be when Troy is no longer a city.'

Yakin had meantime, however, been talking in the

ear of the chieftain who had already spoken in our favour, and who addressed the council.

'O Agamemnon, and ye illustrious chiefs!' said he, 'there is more in this proposal of the merchant than lies on the surface. Let this party of traders approach and enter Troy, but on conditions that a trusty Greek should accompany them in the guise of a Phœnician trader. If these men are admitted into the city, our spy may haply bring back useful intelligence as to the disposition of the enemy's forces and the weak points in his defence, the appearance presented by the city in regard to abundance or scarcity of provisions, and the spirit displayed by the defenders after their recent reverse.'

A heated discussion on this subject ensued between the speaker and Agamemnon; but the final verdict of the council was given in favour of Yakin's proposal, and a Grecian named Memnon, who was familiar with the Phœnician language and manners, was selected by the chiefs for the purpose of entering Troy with the trading party. Having a great desire to visit this famous city, I besought Yakin to allow me to accompany him on this expedition, and he deemed that it might further his purpose to take me with him in my quality of commissioner from the King of Babylon. I therefore took with me the token of my authority to go to the Western lands as messenger and representative of the great king.

About the fall of the evening some Sidonian vessels, carrying provisions for the Trojans, put in stealthily to the same bay which harboured our ships, and their leader being a man well known to

Yakin, it was agreed that our party should follow in the rear of the transport train which was to bear the provisions to the city. The landing of the goods was effected with wonderful celerity and silence in the gathering darkness, and about midnight of a moonless night a brief whistle, three times repeated and responded to by us, announced the arrival of a train of mules, according to prearrangement with the Trojans. So skilfully had the Sidonians packed the goods in bales, that the loading of the mules was accomplished as if by magic, and then the whole train advanced at a moderate pace along a little-frequented route lying considerably to the south of the right wing of the Grecian camp. From the badness of the path and the way in which it was cut up by the feet of the mules, our progress was difficult, and even dangerous; but it behoved us to hasten forward and keep together with the rest, lest patrols from either host, or, still worse, those prowlers and body-searchers who hover about an army like vultures, and who do their work chiefly by night, should fall upon us and cut us off from the rest of the train. Sometimes a heavy-winged night-bird would flit across our path; sometimes we would be startled by the eldritch scream of some marsh-fowl, heron or bittern; and anon some prowling dog would raise a long howl, to be echoed in the far distance by the baying of watch-dogs in either camp.

When the dull prelude of dawn glimmered in the east our route lay through fields of pulse, some of which had been cut down—but most of it had been trampled by the foot of war till it was not worth

gathering—and of unripe grain which some wretched peasants were already beginning to gather in the dim morning twilight in baskets made of reeds. The dawn had already risen upon the earth, and the stars had disappeared on high, like the camp-fires upon the plain, when the last of the mules passed a narrow bridge over the river Scamander, and safely entered the Trojan lines. Here a captain with a band of soldiers was posted, who took strict account of everyone who passed over the stream. It was not till after considerable delay and much parleying that Yakin and his party were allowed to cross. Our troubles were not over, however, for we were conducted into the presence of a Trojan general, who subjected us to an irksome examination, declaring that he had no authority to allow us to enter the city, and that he believed us to be a party of spies sent by the perfidious Achæans. He finally decided that we should be allowed to go onward into the city, but only on condition that we should be blindfolded and attended by a guard of Trojan warriors. Thus did the Trojans prove a match in craft to their enemies, and thus did we make our entrance into the city more like a band of captives than of merchants.

I would have given much to be permitted to inspect the lofty walls and buildings of this famous city, which resembles Babylon thus far, that both are constructed of brickwork. The citadel and royal palace stand upon an eminence called Pergamos, overlooking the plain through which flows the Scamander; but the town itself, in which dwell the common people

and the slaves, is built round the foot and sides of that eminence. Our route lay at first through the lower city, and we were soon in the midst of busy crowds, with all the mingled noises of a populous street—the rattle of wheels, the sound of voices singing, bartering and gossiping, the cry of the vendors of wares from the market-booths, the tramp of troops, and the shout of the captains as they marched past. We ourselves were objects of curiosity and of jeering comment on the part of the volatile Trojans as we mounted upwards along the terraced road which led towards the acropolis of the Teucri.

We had passed through the gateway of the outer rampart into the open court of the citadel; we had entered the main doorway of the palace itself, and traversed the court of the habitation of men, and had at length been led into a common apartment near the megaron, or hall of the men, before our bandages were removed and we were permitted to see. The king himself, a venerable man, who entered leaning upon his staff and the arm of one of his sons, deigned to give us audience, and for him we had prepared a splendid purple robe of the most costly Tyrian make. He bade us welcome in a gracious speech; he complimented Yakin, whom he already knew, upon his courage and skill in running the Grecian blockade and penetrating the city, and, finally, after having inspected our goods, he mooted a project which lay, he said, very near his heart. This was nothing short of an alliance with the Phœnician cities, the terms of which would prove

very advantageous to the commerce and colonizing progress of Phœnicia, if the latter would send a strong fleet to cut off the supplies brought by sea to the Achæan army. Yakin promised to carry back the king's proposal and lay it before the rulers of his native city, and the royal scribe was employed to write out the king's message, which was sealed with the royal seal.

Meantime the Tyrian merchants were spreading out their wares, which consisted in large measure of articles of feminine adornment, such as earrings, necklaces and girdles of precious stones, embroidered slippers, and rings for the hands and feet, amulets and pendants and chains, fine linen and costly robes, anklets for the feet, and fillets to crown the head. Soon the ladies came trooping in from the women's apartments, wives and concubines of the king and his sons—some old and some young, some stately and handsome, and one or two very beautiful; but all of them eager to inspect the Phœnician wares. Then commenced a lively scene of chaffering and pricing the goods, in the midst of which some pages entered to carry away the wares that had been bought. One of the pages was a well-knit youth, very fair in complexion, who specially attracted my attention, and the more so because, on looking towards us, he stopped short and turned suddenly pale. On glancing towards Ariac, I quickly divined that this was no other than his brother Leonor. When this youth approached and was stooping down to lift up the articles which one of the king's wives pointed out to him, Ariac, as if meaning to help him,

stealthily placed a small packet beside the other wares, and whispered in the ear of his brother that he had come for the purpose of rescuing him, and that the packet contained a Phœnician garment and cap, in which, if he were able to put them on privately, he might take his place unnoticed among us and depart from the city in our company.

This was indeed accomplished, and the more easily because we prayed the king to allow us to remain in the city until nightfall, that we might get back to our ships under cover of the darkness.

Journal Continued.

Fifteenth day of Sabat (*January*).—This morning, when daylight began to glimmer through the loophole of my cell, a discovery, stranger than any I have previously made, awaited me. Along with some customary supplies of food I found a square piece of birch-bark, on which were some words in the Grecian language, written in Phœnician characters. Surely this is some divine portent or prodigy; for who amongst all this barbarous people is able to write a letter even in their own language? The writing, being interpreted, ran thus: 'Be of good cheer; thou hast more friends in the neighbourhood than thou art aware of.'

Whatever may be its explanation, the hope is growing within me that some propitious Power is enlisted on my behalf, and that light shall yet arise for me out of the darkness.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHORES OF GREECE.

AFTER leaving the Dardanian coast, two of our ships cast anchor in shelter of the high cliffs of the island of Melitis (Samothrace), purposing, when the wind should blow favourably, to proceed northwards to the Phœnician gold-mines in the island of Thasos, and at Mount Caramine (Pangæus) in Thrace. The rest of the fleet, including the two vessels of Yakin, in one of which I sailed, took a south-westerly course, steering towards the island of Chalcis (Eubœa), where there are famous mines. The Phœnician mariners are as much at home in those seas as on their own coast; they have settlements here and there; and they are familiar with the aspect of all the mountains and headlands. By day they steer their course by the two great landmarks of those regions, to wit, the lofty peaks of Samothrace and the still loftier summit of Mount Athos in the far west. The fertile island of Samothrace has long been known to the Phœnicians, who have here established the mysteries and great annual

festival of the Cabires, the reputed discoverers of mines and inventors of metallurgy.

After leaving Mount Athos to the right, we came in sight of the snow-capped Olympus, which is regarded as a sacred mountain, the Rowandiz of the Achæan race.

As we were passing southwards near the coast of Thessaly, it was found necessary for some of the ships to halt for the purpose of taking in fresh water. After a long search, we came at length to a bay which afforded good anchorage and gave promise of water. As I was ever curious to explore new countries, I asked to be taken to land in one of the boats, having resolved to climb up the cliff towards a summit which promised a good view of the inland region. The captain informed me that there would be a delay of at least four hours ere the work of watering was accomplished, and I resolved to return within that space of time. After an hour's climb I succeeded in gaining the summit, and began to gaze at the superb prospect. To the north was the high range of Olympus, whilst inland from where I stood was a diversified region of fertile valleys, forest and pastoral heights dotted with herdsmen's huts. A lofty headland on the northern side of the bay prevented my seeing a tract of sea in that direction, otherwise my stay on the mountain would have been still shorter than it was. Landward from where I stood I observed a grassy hollow surrounded with wood, where I saw a large herd of wild deer grazing. Thinking to do a pleasure to Captain Yakin, I resolved to hurry down and inform him of this, and

get him to send a party of archers to surround the glade, who might thus easily secure a supply of fresh venison, which would be an agreeable change from the dried tunny and dolphin which formed our usual repast. I have often thought since that time what small things are frequently employed by the gods to turn the current of men's lives: that discovery prevented my being left behind by the ships, and perhaps also my falling into the hands of treacherous enemies. On arriving at the shore, I found all were in commotion; the vessels were hoisting their sails, and the boats were returning from the shore as quickly as possible, and, as the last boat had just left ere I arrived, it was with difficulty I prevailed upon the seamen to put back and take me on board. The cause of the excitement was quickly apparent: a strong fleet of Pelasgian pirates, who had been hidden in some fold of the coast as we came southwards, had suddenly appeared round the headland. The question was whether to await the attack of the pirates, or to seize the occasion of the favourable wind and seek to escape them; and Yakin and his fellow-captains, deeming that nothing was to be gained by a victory which was doubtful, and assured that our ships were superior in sailing qualities, gave orders to set sail as soon as the last boat had arrived. The boat which carried me from the shore arrived in time to be taken on board the smallest vessel of the fleet, called the *Shushan*. Yakin's ship was the last to retreat in presence of the advancing assailants; and so near had the foremost of the pirate ships approached, that some arrows shot by them fell on

board the *Osprey*, slightly wounding one of the seamen, and we could distinctly hear the cries of the foe calling upon us to abide the conflict. Our bold leader, standing on the stern of his ship, returned their defiance with mockery, and so near had the foemen approached that, taking off his hat, Yakin threw it on board the foremost of their vessels. The chase was a long one, but we gradually gained ground and pulled away from the enemy, until long ere nightfall we lost sight of them in the distance.

Our vessels had become divided and dispersed in course of the flight. We had come nearly opposite a mountain range on the west, when an ominous darkness began to gather overhead, and swift flashes of lightning began to cleave the air, and heavy thunder-peals were heard. As there was no convenient haven on the neighbouring coast, orders were given to run before the wind, keeping as far out from the dangerous shore as possible. Owing to the thickness of the haze which began to prevail, we could not see far ahead, and two of the seamen were ordered to keep close watch in case of our running upon the rocks. An old mariner who knew those seas by long experience was set to steer the vessel, and supposed we were now running towards the strait between two islands called Scopelo and Sciatho. Suddenly we entered a thick bank of cloud, and all at once there was a tremendous crash, and the doomed ship was upon the rocks near the foot of overhanging cliffs which towered high above our masthead. All was terror and confusion on board: the ship staggered for a moment like a steed that is

mortally wounded and then heeled over, whilst the masts and cordage, shattered by the shock, came tumbling upon the deck, and the wild surf broke over us. The captain, perceiving the desperate condition of the ship, gave orders to loosen the boats; but while the order was being carried out the ship gave a lurch, and the boats, rolling over, crushed many of the men. In a few seconds more the ship was swamped in the trough of the waves, and began rapidly to sink. As I was unable to swim, I sought to shorten the agony of death by swallowing as much sea-water as possible; but, contrary to my expectation, my head emerged from the waves amid a tumbling mass of floating wreckage and drowning men, and I instinctively clutched at the nearest object, which chanced to be the head of one of the seamen, and we both sank grappling with one another, and rising anon to the surface. Straightway my neighbour, struck by the end of a floating spar, loosened his hold upon me and disappeared beneath the waves, whilst, by the favour of the great gods, I was able to clutch hold of the new object of support. As I clung desperately to it, with head sometimes above, sometimes underneath the waves, a sheep, which must have been taken on board the *Shushan* for sake of provision, was washed across me three times, giving me an appealing bleat each time; but, alas! my plight was as bad as his own, and I had no hand to spare for his help. At length I succeeded in mounting to a better position upon the spar, and several times I was swept past floating seamen who cried for help; but I was myself drift-

ing at the mercy of the cross-currents, and once or twice I was driven against a jutting rock, and was in imminent peril of being dashed to pieces or hurled into the sea. Suddenly the setting sun shone out through a cleft of cloud, and revealed a beautiful bay encircled with tall cliffs, wooded at the summit, whilst at their feet was a beach of glittering sand; but, to my dismay, I found myself in danger of being drifted past it into the deep sea beyond. I could do nothing to steer my own course; it was with difficulty I could cling to the floating spar; and I could only cry to the gods and accept the direction in which the contending currents might buffet me. Finally, being drifted near the shore, I spied a bar of rock over which a great sea was breaking, and to which I was being swiftly and irresistibly borne by the current. I could only resign myself to fate; one moment I was being tossed and swirled like a giant's plaything upon the mighty rollers; another, and there was a thundering shock, and I was instantly engulfed in a mighty whirlpool, spinning about on my plank like a wheel, and losing all ability to think or to pray, till finally consciousness vanished. When I did recover my senses, it was to find myself lying high and dry upon the beach, but bruised and battered, nearly naked, and suffering sharp pain in one of my limbs.

Thankful to have so miraculously escaped the fury of that terrible surf, I first sought to clear my eyes, which were bedimmed with brine, and no sooner had I looked round me than I espied, seated upon a jutting point of rock, a human figure, so fixed and

motionless that it might have been carved in stone long ages ago. The waves dashed their spray around his feet; his elbows rested upon his knees, and his head leant upon his hands. I might hardly have taken him for a human being had not the bleak wind fitfully tossed the matted locks and grizzled beard of the figure, while at times a blast of hail smote him like a scourge. Never did I see anything so forlorn and woebegone, and it was not till I had with difficulty dragged myself some paces nearer, that the shape of the soaked garments betrayed the presence of Ephron, the captain of the shipwrecked vessel. From his gestures when he at length began to move, I would not have been surprised to see him cast himself into the sea; but, lifting my voice, I addressed him by name, when, with a start, he turned upon me a face so gaunt and haggard that it was with difficulty I could recognise it as that of Ephron. I was trying to move towards him, but so painful had my wounded limb become that I found walking to be impossible. Seeing my plight, he hastily rose up and came down from the rock, casting off at the same time a life-belt made of inflated skin, somewhat like those employed by Assyrian swimmers. He gazed upon me for a few moments with a dejected air, and, sighing deeply, he thus addressed me:

'Hast thou, too, O dark-haired son of Chaldea, been given back from the abyss by the all-devouring monster, and cast upon this desolate unfriendly coast? Haply thou art one who still prefers the daylight of this world to the dimness of Sheol. Thou

hast been sent by some deity, whether good or evil I know not, to interrupt an unfinished debate in my mind as to whether I should not plunge again in the abyss where my earthly all and my last hopes lie buried. But thou art hurt and unable to move to a place of shelter; let me carry thee to yonder cove; after that I shall end my debate with the deep which has given me back my life, but taken from me all that makes life worth living.'

Thus saying, he raised me up and placed me on his back, for though his locks were gray, he was still vigorous and strong. On looking about, I saw that we were on the shore of a narrow bay engirdled by high cliffs, which shelved towards a cove which appeared to end in a deep cavern. On our way thither we found a cherry-tree growing at the foot of the cliff, and Ephron paused underneath it whilst I, raising myself upon his shoulders, pulled a quantity of the fruit. When we reached the cavern, having passed by a narrow ledge of fallen rock between the water's edge and the foot of the cliff, we found some vestiges of an extinct fire, and other traces of recent occupation; and we concluded that this sheltered bay was probably a place where the Pelasgian pirates were wont to conceal their ships, and that the cave was one of their haunts. The thought disquieted me; but I comforted myself with the reflection that no ships were likely to venture on such a night along the hazardous roadway where the *Shushan* had perished. I first of all began to try vainly to kindle a fire by twirling a pointed stick in the groove of a dry piece of driftwood; my companion looked darkly

on the while, and at length, breaking the silence, he exclaimed :

'Knowest thou not, O Chaldean, that thou dost spend thy strength for naught, seeing that Ephron, the son of Almar, and his evil fortunes are with thee. Some cruel, malevolent deity pursues me, and now the cup of my calamity is filled to overflowing. I was an Ekronite, and sailed in my youth with my father Almar, who was drowned when I was in my seventeenth year. Then my mother besought me to remain with her on land, and I hired myself out as a herdsman, and finally I became myself the possessor of herds and flocks. But the Amalekites fell upon me, and in one day I lost all my possessions. Then I took once more to sea, and sailed to Cyprus and Crete, and even to the coasts of Tarshish, and became at length the owner of a ship. This one and then a second I lost with tempest or pirates; but finally, after middle age, the star of fortune seemed to be on the ascendant, and I was growing rich. But my three good ships were driven in one day upon the Carian coast, and what the sea and the tempest left was devoured by plundering natives. Then, though I was fifty years old, I began the world once more at the lowest step of the ladder—bravely, indeed, for the sake of my wife and children, yet with a heavier heart than of yore—and at length becoming possessor of one little craft, I named it the *Shushan*, after my little daughter. Now again all is gone; and I am too old to shake myself as a strong man and stand up anew to wrestle with the fates.'

At this he bowed his head upon his breast and wept ; but, with a joyful exclamation, I showed him the flame which had at last sprung up :

' So let the flame of your hope and courage kindle anew,' I cried, ' and take this as an omen from heaven that your heel shall yet be on the neck of the unknown adversary who pursues you.'

Yet he continued to lament and to shake his head mournfully, and I had much ado to keep him from going to cast himself into the sea. However, he remained with me in the cave that night, and having dried our garments, we laid us down to sleep, and slept soundly till broad daylight next morning.

My companion began to bestir himself early, and undertook to go forth in quest of fresh water. He also proposed to clamber up the cliff to spy out if there were any traces to be seen of the other ships, and if there were any civilized natives who might render us help in our destitute circumstances. He left the cave, and sought a place which seemed to hold out the prospect of his climbing to the top, and ere long he disappeared from my view. I waited long and patiently in expectation of his return—I waited until the noonday hour had passed; yet he never appeared, and at length I thought it was high time for me to look to my own safety.

There was now no trace of last night's storm. A clear blue sky bent overhead, and the warm sunshine streamed in at the entrance of the cave. Sea-fowl flitted round a neighbouring headland, which concealed part of the bay from my view, and some of them alighted on the heaving waves within a few

yards of me. The wind had fallen to a perfect calm, and there was only a slight agitation on the azure sea. When I tried to rise and walk, I found my limb as powerless and painful as on the previous evening. I could only drag myself slowly along the rocks in quest of shell-fish, and when I appeared outside the cave, there was a great fluttering and clangour of sea-fowl which rose up from the surface of the bay into the air at my approach. Part of that day I spent in endeavouring to cook the shell-fish which I had gathered, and afterwards I fell to amusing myself by manufacturing a wind-instrument from the fragments of reed which I found strewn among the shingle by the waves. This instrument of music, called by the Achæans a syrinx, I had learnt from the Phœnician seamen to play upon.

Whilst thus employed, as I was musing on the fate of my late companions, and pondering the chances of my ever again beholding them, I was startled from my reverie by the sound of plashing oars. Terrified lest it should prove to be some Pelasgian pirates making for their wonted haunt in the cave, I retreated further in, and from my place of concealment I watched for their coming, when, lo! my eyes were greeted by a very different spectacle from what I had feared. Three boats shot round the point of the cliff, each containing, not rough seamen or murderous pirates, but a bevy of damsels in gay attire, who as they approached, with the sunbeams lighting on their long wavy golden hair, with one ringlet hanging in front, or gleaming on a snowy shoulder from which the *peplos*

robe had been negligently flung, wakened with songs and laughter the echoes of the cliffs. Evidently practised and fearless rowers, they seemed well acquainted with the spot, and drew in at a landing-place a yard or two from the entrance of the cave. With graceful agility they leapt from the boats, which they moored to the rocks, and then they dispersed themselves along the beach, some sitting down upon the slippery algous rocks, and some playfully pelting each other with fruit, or splashing each other with pearly drops of water. It was as when one espies without detection a party of beautiful wild-fowl disporting in their native haunts with negligent grace and freedom. The sunlight, reflected from the dancing waves and flickering amid the shadowy rocks and coves, brought out the rounded outline of their forms as it played on a delicately moulded arm, or marbled a full and finely-chiselled chin, or gleamed on pearly teeth and dark eyes. These were of the daughters of the Hanebu, or lords of the North, whose beauty is celebrated and highly prized even in distant Egypt. I thought of the stories I had often heard from the lips of Phœnician seamen, who, indeed, frequently invoked such beings in their prayers for fair weather, of supernatural and beautiful creatures called Nereids, who were said to haunt the warm bays and marble grottoes of that romantic coast, and it seemed as if I had suddenly lighted amid a party of them in their favourite haunt.

Most of the band made their way towards the cave, but at first they seemed reluctant to enter it,

and I could hear a half-scared, half-playful discussion as to who should lead the way, and at length one of their number was thrust forward to examine if the cavern was occupied or not. I could now plainly mark, from the vesture and carriage of the visitors, as well as from the quality of their boats, that they could not be of humble origin or rank.

'What seest thou, Clymene?' they asked, as their leader stood peering into the dimness of the cave. It was a pretty, oval face with regular features, which wore a timorous, half-wild expression, as of some startled roe which scents danger from a certain quarter. I was suddenly aware that I had left my rough seaman's cap on a point of rock that stood in the obscurity midway up the cave. As yet, however, she did not seem to perceive it, and she replied mirthfully:

'Only Glaucus and a band of Nereids.'

The others were preparing to enter with playful laughter, when their leader made a warning gesture and stood for a moment irresolute: evidently the cap had been discovered. I was now in a great dilemma, and terribly embarrassed as to how I should act. I was afraid to discover my presence too rudely, and so drive them immediately away, leaving me there in hunger and pain; and yet I shrank from remaining hidden and spying upon their privacy. So I began very softly to play a plaintive air upon my reeds. Immediately there was a flutter among the nymphs; the more timorous screamed outright, and all of them retreated a few paces: it was just as in the morning, when my sudden appearance had fluttered

the sea-fowl and driven them off in confusion and clangour. I observed that the one who had been addressed by the others as Clymene was more courageous than the rest, and withdrew more slowly and with greater dignity. Her companions rushed into the boats with such precipitation that these were in danger of being overset, but speedily all of them were on board, and the boats were pushed out into the deep water. In the stillness of the cave I could still hear their musical voices as they debated what to do, and what dreadful thing might be lurking in the cave. One suggested that it might be a trap set for them by Phœnician robbers.

'Nay, Lycoris,' said the leading nymph, 'for there is neither foreign ship nor boat in the bay.'

'Then it must have been the god Pan himself playing upon the reeds to lure us into his hands, that he might seize upon some of our number. Let us hasten homewards.'

Now, as I had never found that ladies were terrified or repelled by my face and figure, but rather the reverse, I deemed it best to scramble as well as I could out of my lurking-place and show that I was truly human. Only I was sorry that my garments had lost something of their lustre and freshness from their recent immersion in the briny waves. Dragging myself up till I stood upon the point of a jutting rock, I beckoned to them with my most courteous gesture. Still somewhat scared, the nymphs kept their boats at a safe distance, and were evidently curious to know who this not uncomely stranger could be.

Addressing them in the Achæan speech, I made a thousand excuses for having been the unhappy and most unwilling means of disturbing their festivities; but I deemed it best to let them know that a stranger was in the cave. I was there with no sinister intention, but as an unfortunate shipwrecked voyager I was detained a prisoner through the state of one of my limbs. My case was comparable to that of Philoctetes, who at that very time was prevented joining his comrades in arms at the siege of Troy, and was confined a lonely prisoner in a cave on Lemnos. I would willingly withdraw and allow them undisturbed possession of their retreat, only my withdrawal would be a work of a little time and difficulty; and I begged them in their compassionate hearts to pity my miserable plight, and on their return home to get some boatman to come and deliver me from my prison and the danger I was in of starving of hunger.

A few of them, hearing my foreign accent, were not yet reassured, and, apparently dreading some ruse, muttered the Achæan proverb, 'Beware of Phœnician deceit'; but the greater part appeared to listen with interest, especially when I spoke of the siege of Troy. Clymene, rowing a little nearer, called to me to know if I had any recent tidings from the war, and if I myself had haply come recently from Ilion. When I informed them that I had been in the Grecian camp not longer ago than the last new moon, all the three boats drew a little nearer, though still keeping at a safe distance; and I could see from the anxiously eager looks cast upon

me by their bright eyes that many of them must have kinsmen, and probably lovers, in the Grecian army. Soon I was assailed by a shower of questions: 'My father, Piranthos; my brother, Kalistos—can you give me tidings of their welfare?' 'Eucrates, Nico—are they still alive?' 'Did you hear aught of a young warrior named Eudoxos, who accompanied the leader of the Locrians to the war?'

This last question was asked by the nymph Clymene with a somewhat embarrassed air and blushing mien, from which I gathered that the young man was her lover. By happy chance I was able to inform her that Eudoxos, whom I had seen in the Grecian camp, was yet living, and had distinguished himself in the war. I saw that Clymene would willingly have taken me on board her boat; but her companions, fearful of 'Phœnician deceit,' restrained her. One of the boats was, however, sent round the neighbouring point to procure the help of some boatmen. As I chanced to speak of my hunger and long fasting, Clymene stood up at the prow of the boat and began to throw me one or two apples, when an unlucky accident befell her. Whilst standing poised on the edge of the boat, in the act of throwing, she was overbalanced by a sudden lurch of the craft, and splashed into the waves. Whether or not she could swim I knew not; but, embarrassed by her garment, she might with difficulty have reached a place of safety without help. In a moment I had plunged into the waves, and struck out for the spot where she had sunk. I had just reached the place, and grasped her long hair, which floated on the sur-

face half submerged, when a chorus of shrill screams arose from the boats, and their rowers hastily retreated a considerable space. The cause of this became evident to me when, bringing my burden to the land, I was startled by seeing the captain of the *Shushan* descending the rocks at the point where he had left me. Clymene herself, who was nothing the worse for her dip in the waves, took alarm at sight of him, evidently thinking this was a Phœnician plot to ensnare her, and would have plunged again into the sea. With difficulty I restrained her and reassured her as to our motives; it was not, however, until both Ephron and I withdrew to some distance that the two boats put in to the shore to take her off.

At length some fishermen came round the promontory, bringing two boats, into one of which I and my companion entered, and, attended by the other boats with their virgin-rowers, we were conveyed to the abode of Oileus, king of that region. There I was hospitably entertained, partly because of the good news I brought from Troy. There I remained for the space of three weeks, till, hearing that some Phœnician ships had recently arrived at Chalcis, a town in the neighbouring island of that name,* near which are gold-mines well known to the Phœnicians, I set out for that city in hope of finding some of Yakin's ships among the newly-arrived vessels. Nor was I disappointed; for all of them, save the ill-fated *Shushan*, had safely weathered the recent tempest, and were lying in the harbour of

* According to Pliny, Eubœa was at first named Chalcis.

Chalcis. From that city we proceeded upon our voyage towards Argos, where we arrived on the sixteenth day of the month Arah-samna. We cast anchor in a broad and sheltered bay which threw a long arm inland towards the plain of Argos and the lofty walls of cliff-perched Tiryns. Here two of our vessels remained for a month, bartering with the people of Argos and Mycenæ, whilst the others went down to the island of Cythera, where there is an ancient Phœnician settlement.

One day as Ariac, Leonor and I were walking along the beach, and were watching the embarkation of some cattle which the Lord of Tiryns was conducting in person—for these barbarian rulers, unlike our Eastern princes, accompany their followers in the arts of husbandry and pasturage as well as war, and put their hands to the plough and the shepherd's staff as well as the sword—we were startled by a voice hailing us from an approaching boat. An elderly man, of Western aspect, clad in the Grecian dress, was eagerly holding out his hands towards us, and calling upon Ariac by name. This man proved to be no other than Ambrax, the Lelegian, who had brought the two youths from their native country, and whose two ships had just arrived in the Bay of Argos. He leapt quickly to land, and greeted the young men with demonstrations of joy, for he had heard of the capture by Carian pirates of the Phœnician ship in which Ariac and his brother had sailed from Crete; and the two young men, on their side, were overjoyed to see once more the face of their friend Ambrax.

This fortunate meeting caused an entire change in our plans; for whereas Hanan, Yakin's brother, had agreed to convey me to the mouth of the Eridan River, though with no great goodwill, because the Hesperian Sea is infested with fierce Leleges and Pelasges, who are generally hostile to their Phœnician rivals, it was now decided that Ambrax, after having visited Salamis and Athens, should himself convey us to the Eridan in spring. Yakin and his brother were now both free to return to Phœnicia, whither they were to go and take in many Canaanite emigrants and convey them to Tarshish. Thence they would sail by the Pillars of Bel and explore their way to Albion, where I hoped to meet them when I should arrive.

Whilst tarrying at Argos, I sought to perfect my acquaintance with the Grecian speech, and might have found abundant employment in teaching the languages and writing of Phœnicia and Egypt to young Greeks. I made the acquaintance of a merchant named Phyleus, through whom I found much opportunity of studying the manners of his countrymen. With him I visited the more inland city of Mycenæ and the strongly-fortified town of Tiryns, perched on its height overlooking the bay and the coming and going of ships. Its walls, within which Herakles, the Achæan Bel, is reputed to have been born, are held by the Greeks to have been the strongest in the world. From their appearance, however, I concluded they had been the work of Phœnician masons. I visited Asinê, lying down the bay on the one side and Lake Lerna on the other

side, where Herakles slew the dragon Hydra, just as Merodach slew the dragon Siamat, and the Egyptian Horus killed Set.

The people of this country are the most attractive of all the barbarians I have met—if, indeed, they can be called barbarians. They are beautiful in form and feature, very warlike and high-spirited, clever and quick-witted, and fond of gaiety and all kinds of novelties. They eagerly purchase the wares of Egypt and the East, which are imported to them by Phœnician merchants. Living around the warm Bay of Argos, the common people, male and female, wear usually but one garment of woollen, which is hung upon their shoulders and fastened with fibulæ or with thorns. The robe of the women, called the *peplos*, is always worn with a negligent grace, the right arm, and sometimes part of the breast, being exposed to view.

Nature has been kind and generous to this favoured race. The sun does not scorch or exhaust their frame with his angry glare, nor does a Hyperborean winter freeze and render sluggish their blood. Theirs is a land of corn-laden plains and vine-clad heights; of sparkling streams and cool fountains; of warm, sheltered bays and sunny, fertile islands. The sea is their usual pathway, providing them also with fish, and bringing them foreign merchandise. The land demands only moderate industry, not hard toil, for its cultivation, and leaves them ample leisure for the festivals and athletic games of which they are so fond. Hence they are sound, supple, and elegant in body, and, having also leisure and inclination for

mental exercise, they are fond of poetical recitations and political discussions. As external nature in that enviable climate is finely tempered, so their inner nature, with its equal adaptation to thought and action, is finely balanced.

The sum of their wisdom is to live agreeably to Nature, and this maxim is generously interpreted by them. All propensities of their nature which do not glaringly infringe the common good are indulged. Being markedly sociable, they are closely banded together in communities, and the acts of the individual must always have regard to the general good. They live under kings or chiefs, whom they call *anactes*, and, like the Amorites, they have as many monarchs as there are cities; but these do not oppress the people, but live among them in patriarchal simplicity. The greater chiefs preside over assemblies of lesser rulers, who meet to consult at certain occasions, and they lead the people in war, or call them to arms to repel the pirates of Caria or Mæonia, who infest the coasts. At that time many of the able-bodied men were absent at the siege of Troy with the lords of Argos and Mycenæ, whose jurisdiction was committed for the meanwhile to certain relatives among the neighbouring chiefs.

Open-minded, and eager to learn whatever is new, the Greeks freely adopt Phœnician usages, and hence the worship of Astarte, whom they call Aphrodite, is spreading rapidly among them, and is united with that of Bacchus in the great annual festivals.

The light and lively temperament of this people is not darkened or overawed by the character of the

divinities they worship. These are equally indulgent to themselves and their worshippers, and do not require to be propitiated by penances and bloody rites. It is a bright and shallow religion, like the shallow, sparkling streams of their country. They are not haunted, as we Babylonians are, by crowds of demons who require to be exorcised or propitiated; but, on the contrary, the groves and hills, their streams and grots and sunny bays, are haunted by beautiful nymphs and sportive fauns.

I do not say that this people are not addicted to aught that is gross or murderous, but they keep it in the background so far as possible. Their aim is to live a joyous, sociable, pleasant existence, and to strew the pathway of labour with garlands and songs; and if for them a stern, irresistible Fate lurks somewhere behind the bright veil of the visible world, and if for them there sits a relentless Judge in the dark underworld, they put off the thought of each as far as possible until the hour of calamity or of death.

But here I must not fail to record a strange thing that befell me ere I left Argos. That bay on the Grecian coast was truly the last spot on which I should have expected any light to be cast for me upon the mystery of the ancestral tablet shown to me by my father on the eve of my setting out for Dilmon. Yet so it proved; for one evening, as I was seated on the beach directly below the walls of Tiryns conversing with an acquaintance, an old Phœnician seaman named Asmon, who had seen much of the world, and had for a year or two been

in Egyptian bondage, our conversation chanced to turn upon the people of the Hebrews, along with whom he had been set to work as a slave. From him I learnt that those Hebrews claimed descent from that very Abraham, son of Terah, who was the founder of the sect who worshipped one Supreme God, to whom, according to family tradition, my ancestor Elnazir belonged. This information gave me a new impulse to inquire into the doctrines of the Hebrews; but the very next day the current of my thoughts was diverted into a new channel by the return of Ambrax the Lelegian.

JOURNAL CONTINUED.

Twenty-eighth day of Sabat (January).— Since yesterday I have been thinking deeply about the Hebrews and the One God worshipped by them. It is strange I had never thought of connecting my ancestor Elnazir and the sect of Abram with the Hebrews; yet I knew not that the origin of this people was from my native country. Here, then, was the secret of the tablet shown me by my father on the eve of my departure for Dilmon. Last evening my thoughts went back to my early home on the banks of the Great River. I was once more a happy child, ere the family nest was broken up and the inmates scattered. I mourned the sad fate which had so early snatched away both my parents ere I could in some measure repay their love and undo my many acts of early disobedience. Now they would never know upon earth how much my heart turned towards them. I thought of my last parting with my father, and of the wish expressed by him

that I should make diligent research, and, if possible, obtain information concerning the one Supreme God and His worshippers. I seemed to have neglected the last sacred injunction he had laid upon me; and now that the mystery was cleared up, and I knew so much about the God of our fathers, I grieved to think that he could no longer receive from me the information he so earnestly desired; yet he seemed to be calling to me from out the stillness and laying it upon me as a solemn duty not to reject the God of our fathers.

During the night I had a vision of the Supreme God, but so terrible was He in the unapproachable majesty of His holiness, that all my comeliness was changed into corruption before Him, and I sank down into the abyss to hide myself from the lightning splendour of His purity. Then One flew from off the throne and descended with me into the abyss, and bore me aloft from the depths. When we emerged into the light, lo! I was cleansed without and within; and as I looked towards that dread throne for devouring flame, there were green pastures and pleasant streams. The throne still remained, but with a rainbow veil softening its awful lustre. I saw Him who sat upon it, bearing in His right hand the sceptre of love and law. A choir of attendant cherubim made the vault of heaven ring with glad music, to which my inmost spirit answered in unison; and when I asked my Deliverer His name, He said: 'Ask not My name: it is a secret not yet divulged. Call Me the true Merodach, the Son, the Revealer, the Mediator, the Deliverer.'

CHAPTER IX.

AMONG THE LAKE-DWELLERS.

ON the arrival of Ambrax and his ships in the Bay of Argos, I, along with the young men Ariac and Leonor, set sail with him and proceeded upon the next stage of our voyage to the Western lands. We sailed southwards along the coast of Laconia till we passed the island of Cythera, which is an ancient Phœnician settlement and shrine of Astarte, who is here said to have sprung out of the sea-foam. Here also there are purple fisheries, and I saw the fishermen off the rocky coast letting down their baskets, baited, to entrap the *murex*, just as is done on the coast of Tyre. After doubling the southern promontories of Greece, we steered northwards, keeping in sight the mountains and islands of Western Greece for many days. Somewhat inland, in a region named Epirus, as I was informed, the Greeks have the chief temple of their religion at a place named Dodona. Here there is an altar, surrounded by a great circle of triliths standing in an oak-grove, dedicated to Bel, whom the Greeks named

Zeus. I wished to visit this place, but Ambrax declared that it lay too far inland, and would take us too much out of our way.

After crossing an arm of the great western sea, we at length sighted the land of the Japygians, whose people were of very savage aspect, and where I seemed to have arrived at the world's end; yet our captain informed me that to arrive at Gadir and the Pillars of Bel demanded a voyage of several weeks, or even months, further to the west. I was amazed to find how high the constellation of the Great Bear had now risen in the heavens, so that one part of it was far up towards the zenith. In the middle of the month Sivan we cast anchor at the mouth of the river Eridan, near a Pelasgian settlement called Atria, and here I caught the first distant glimpse of the snow-capped summits of the Alpian mountains, at sight of which my two young comrades shed tears of joy. They were unwilling to wait for the caravan of goods which was to be sent northwards by Ambrax, and they prevailed upon me to set out, accompanied by four porters, on our journey to their native country. We went by boat for some days up the river Eridan, on whose banks live the warlike nation of the Rasens (Etruscans). In the marshy country on either side of the Eridan the people live in wooden dwellings reared upon piles, which reminded me of some of the houses in the country of Gambul, at the mouth of the Euphrates.

After leaving the river, we journeyed for some days towards a great cleft in the mountains, which seemed to stand as a wall in front of us, and to rise

ever higher into the sky as we advanced. The natives of those mountains, who are herdsmen of very wild and barbarous appearance, were driving their cattle up the sides of the mountains towards the pasture-slopes, where the sun had now driven away the snow. Their bearing toward us was rude and menacing, and Ariac only imperfectly understood their speech. I afterwards learned to distinguish in this country two races very distinct in appearance: one of these, the same race to which Ariac belonged, was tall and fair, having come at some early period as immigrants from the North, and, being the ruling class, was in possession of the most fertile districts of the country; the other was darker in complexion and hair, and squat in figure, reminding me of the Hittites; and this race lived either on the lakes and in the fertile valleys in subjection to the ruling race, or was thrust into the higher and more barren regions. Happily, we lighted upon a herdsman who had been upon the shores of Lake Accron,* and had been kindly treated by Ariac's kinsmen. Without this man to guide us, we should have failed to reach our destination; for not only were we in peril from robbers and wild beasts, but our track lay over a dangerous ice-slope, which could only be crossed under the direction of a native. Once or twice we ran great risks from the fall of immense masses of snow, which came tumbling down from the mountains; and truly glad was I when at length we reached the foot of a valley whose stream was a tributary of the Rodan.

* See Appendix, Note N.

On arriving at our destination, near the place where the Rodan enters Lake Accron, the arrival of Ariac and Leonor was hailed with astonishment and joy by their kindred, who welcomed the young men as if they had returned from the dead.

When they learnt who I was, and that I had been the means of saving Ariac's life, I was overwhelmed with kindness by his nearest relatives; for these barbarians possess many noble qualities, and are as warm in friendship as they are fierce in war. The father of Ariac, whose name was Helico, was a near kinsman to the ruler of the Daliternians, who inhabited the valley of the Rodan, and was himself the Vixpater, or headman, of a section of the tribe who lived in wooden huts built upon platforms standing upon beams of wood above the surface of the lake. It behoved me, as a stranger, to be presented to Aramnes, head-chief or patriarch of the Daliternians, whose abode was upon a rocky eminence called Dinamion, not far from the end of the lake. I was accompanied on this visit by Ariac and his father, and we went by boat most of the way. The fortress, which is surrounded by water, stands in a high and commanding position overlooking the valley, and encompassed on all sides but one by lofty mountains. The construction of this stronghold is somewhat rude and primitive, the houses being little better than wooden or wattled huts, surrounded by a trench and a rampart of great stones.

The old chief Aramnes was a man of commanding presence and venerable appearance, who, in spite of

his years and the snowy whiteness of his beard, had still traces of martial fire in his look. He had, however, devolved the captainship of the tribe in time of war upon Helico, who also assisted him in his offices of judge and priest.

We were admitted into the hall of the largest house in the stronghold, and found Aramnes seated on a wooden settle covered with beautiful furs. A great array of warlike weapons hung upon the walls, and there were various articles in the room which must have found their way to this remote spot from Phœnicia and Egypt. Most of the wives or female attendants of the chief retired to the women's quarters at our entrance. The old chief remained seated at our approach, and, as I was about to prostrate myself before him in the Eastern manner, I was restrained by Helico. It appeared that among these warlike and independent people of the North it is only slaves who are allowed to prostrate themselves. Aramnes received his young kinsman Ariac with marks of astonishment and paternal affection, and made him recount the whole story of his adventures during his five years' absence.

In myself the old man manifested an eager and amused curiosity, and gave me a highly hospitable reception, and ordered an ample, though primitive, entertainment to be prepared in honour of the visitors. After a time he seemed, indeed, to take quite a fancy to me, and had me often as a visitor at his dwelling, when he would ply me with all sorts of questions as to my people and the cities and nations I had visited. I found, to my surprise, that this intelligent

old chief had never heard even the name of the great city Babylon, or of its renowned king. He was dimly acquainted with the names of Argos and Ilion and Sidon, and had also heard of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, or Kadmians, as he called them. He was inquisitive on the subject of the pyramids and temples of Egypt, but seemed to believe that the pile-dwellings of his tribe were the greatest triumphs of man's architectural skill upon earth, and that his own country was the centre of the world's enlightenment. He questioned me much regarding the ships and mines of the Phœnicians, but was chiefly interested in the art of war which I described as carried on by the Greeks and Trojans.

When I told Aramnes of the object of my present journey, he entered with great zest into the subject, his interest in it being evidently quickened by the promise held out by it of advantage to his tribe, because the bronze weapons used by his people had to be imported, with considerable difficulty, from the southern side of the Alps. He knew the island of Albion by report, and quoted certain exaggerated accounts he had heard of its metallic riches, such as that the rocks of the island were composed of copper and tin and precious stones; and he discussed with me the feasibility of opening a commercial route from that island across the continent and over the Alps to the mouth of the river Eridan. One shrewd suggestion was made by him: it seemed that near the other end of the lake there lived a tribe called the Tamenians, a branch of the nation of the Brigones, which a generation or two before had

emigrated from Albion and had settled as conquerors at various points in greater or less power, and still kept up some intercourse with their insular kinsfolk. These Brigones, Aramnes thought, might form a valuable chain of communication between the island of Albion and Lake Accron. He further offered to invite Brannus, the Pendern, or chief, of the Tamenians, to come with some of his attendants as guests to Dinamion on the occasion of the great midsummer festival which was approaching, when the matter in question might be talked over. It afterwards appeared that the crafty chief had another motive in giving this invitation, for, though formerly his tribe had been hostile to that of the Tamenians, they were now both alike threatened with danger from a powerful chief named Lygorix, who lived further to the north, and it was highly desirable that a league should be formed by all the tribes surrounding the lake, in order to repel the common foe.

Accordingly, on the eve of the festival, Brannus and his train arrived in numerous boats, with much pomp of music and banners, and were received with vast acclamation, a great company of boats having gone out to meet and pilot them through the dangerous shallows in the neighbourhood of Dinamion. This barbarian chief, Brannus, was a very tall man, of warlike aspect, fair-haired and blue-eyed, and slightly past middle age. In his train, along with some formidable warriors, were a number of ladies, fairer and more beautiful than almost any I have elsewhere seen. Their yellow hair was adorned with bronze hairpins, and on their persons

they wore a profusion of barbaric ornaments, in the shape of torques, bracelets, and fibulæ of bronze and silver. Aramnes received the party at the entrance of his stronghold, and, after the two chiefs had exchanged greetings with a certain stately joviality, the old man, with some return of youthful fire in his eye, gallantly saluted the ladies.

'By the beard of Belin,' said he, turning towards Brannus, 'you bring me a more charming company than you did on your last visit, when you had but a party of grim and bearded warriors at your back.'

'Yea, my venerable hero,' answered Brannus, 'yet, by the sword-hilt of Camulus, I can vouch that the welcome you accorded us on that occasion lacked nothing in the way of warmth; albeit we find your portal more easy of entrance to-day than it was then.'

I was present that same evening at a great feast which Aramnes had provided, not only for Brannus and his followers, but for Dinwalda, the chief of another tribe, called the Tylangians, and in the course of the evening the three chieftains took an oath of mutual friendship, and pledged it publicly by drinking together out of a three-cornered cup. Then, as they stood up together in the midst of the hall, sword in hand, and brought the points of their levelled sword-hilts together so as to make three equal angles, a white-haired priest drew near and blessed their swords, and, in the name of Camulus, the god of battles, invoked victory upon their united arms. I was much impressed by the appearance of this venerable priest, who, I was told, had sprung

from the island of Albion, and belonged to a peculiarly venerated class named Druids. Then some minstrels pertaining to the house of each chieftain sang to a rude melody, accompanied by the music of a primitive harp, the doughty deeds of their chieftains' line for many generations. I was introduced in the course of the evening to the two stranger chiefs, and, thinking to add to the entertainment, I volunteered to perform some feats of magic which I had learnt, some in my own country, and others in Egypt—as, for example, the changing of a rod into a serpent, which I had provided for the occasion. These tricks created the utmost astonishment among these simple barbarians, and I was evidently regarded with awe, as possessing more than human power ; but having no wish to be reputed a sorcerer, I took pains to explain how the things were done. The chieftains and their families were evidently intelligent enough to understand my explanation, but some of their followers still looked askance at me throughout the evening.

That evening, when darkness had sunk down upon the earth, the surface of the lake presented a wonderfully animated spectacle. Innumerable boats were shooting to and fro, each bearing lighted torches of pitch-pine, and here and there fires were kindled upon the heights and on the shores of the lake, and the people were engaged in dancing round them. I was reminded of what I had witnessed of the worship of Baal-Moloch in Phœnicia, by seeing many of the people leaping through the fire and passing their children across the flames, which they believed to be

means of purification and of protection against diseases and the power of demons throughout the year.

The next day was mainly occupied in boat-racing, in which these lake-people are very expert; and the three allied tribes contended together for prizes offered by the chiefs. I have observed that all the Northern peoples are fond, like the Greeks, of athletic games and contests in the open air. I had a good position for witnessing the races, upon a broad platform near the boat-haven of Dinan. Aramnes himself and his bodyguard were stationed here, along with his guests. I admired the graceful figures and beautiful complexion of the ladies, who were keenly interested spectators of the proceedings, and had turned out in all their finery. The tallest and fairest of all, however, were those who had come in the train of Brannus. A Babylonian, had he been transported directly to the spot, might have deemed those fair creatures were Northern genii of the race of Sabitu and Siduri, who guard the gates of the earth-surrounding ocean.

Among the races which created the liveliest interest were those in which the high-born damsels contended together two by two, and when they came to compete in the single-handed race, I offered, as the prize to the best female rower, a pair of costly silver bracelets of Syrian workmanship. This proved the most exciting contest of the day, and was won by Hethra, the second daughter of the Pendern.

At the close of the races came the ceremony of the presentation of prizes by the respective chiefs,

who sat upon benches placed on a conical mound, which was the gathering-place of the tribe, and at which Aramnes was wont to dispense justice. When I was about to hand to the presiding chief the prize I had promised, he asked me to present it myself to the winner. When the herald called out the name of Hethra, she approached me with an air of timid modesty, as if slightly afraid of the foreigner, and yet withal with a measure of proud self-possession becoming the daughter of a powerful chief. A flush of excitement suffused her cheeks, and contrasted with the snowy whiteness of her neck, and her bright eyes beamed with gratification as I adjusted the beautiful bracelets upon her wrists. Methought I had never seen earthly creature so comely in mien or graceful in form, and my heart went out to the damsel. Her eyes were deep blue, like the waters of the lake, or the beads of Tyrian glass which formed her necklace; her neck rivalled in whiteness the snow upon the distant mountains, and her variegated scarf, fastened on her bosom by a silver fibula, was thrown over her left shoulder.

The great ceremony of the festival was still to come, it being the custom of the Daliternians to go up on midsummer eve to the summit of a neighbouring mountain, called Torreja, there to await and to worship the rising sun.* Hence this mountain is esteemed peculiarly sacred, and it is from its sides that most of the timber is obtained for the construction of the pile-dwellings of their communities. It is the custom that every young man

* See Appendix, Note O.

who marries must not only build his own cottage upon the common platform, but must fetch from the mountain as many beams of timber as shall be declared by the heads of the community as necessary for the repair or extension of the piles supporting the platform. We set out for the mountain early in the evening, Aramnes being carried up in a litter by four stout porters, and some of the older men and of the ladies being mounted upon horses or mules. I also was offered a steed, but, being strong and active, I preferred to go afoot among the younger part of the processionists. It seems that this is the great season of the year for the young people becoming acquainted with a view to marrying, though among them marriage is not a matter of mere mutual consent. Frequently the bridegroom, if he is a man of some power, and the damsel belongs to another tribe or sept, abducts his bride by strategy or by force, which is a common cause of feuds and bloodshed between different tribes, though frequently the abductor is allowed to retain his captive on payment of a sufficient indemnity. The younger processionists to the mountain were allowed that night to go in couples by mutual attraction and permission of parents; and I perceived that my friend Ariac was walking in the van with Rodogil, eldest daughter of the Pendern. These two were well matched, and made a superbly handsome pair; but I was chiefly interested in Hethra, and the question of who might be her companion. This I could not at first discover, because courtesy detained me for a time near the old chief's litter, and he was in a

talkative mood, seeking to initiate me into a knowledge of the religious customs of his tribe. At length, when he became plunged in a somewhat heated discussion of Druidism with the Tamenian priest Cosabelin, who rode beside him on a white pony, I seized the occasion to press forward towards the Pendern's party. After a time I came up with them, and found that Hethra had no male companion, but was walking alongside of Dovna, her mother. I thought the elder lady seemed jealous of my approach to her daughter, and discouraged it; but, after I had made myself agreeable to the mother herself, helping her at certain difficult parts of the route, she appeared flattered, and at length became quite friendly and voluble. Being herself a Daliternian by birth, she spoke the language of that tribe, which by this time I well understood. She gave me a good deal of the history of the two tribes, which had been bitterly hostile to each other at a period when the foreign Tamenians were much more powerful than they now are. After many battles and much bloodshed, on the death of the warlike chief of the Tamenians, his son Brannus had sought her hand in marriage, and this had cemented a friendship of many years' standing between the tribes. The quarrel had afterwards again broken out; but now, said she, a happier and more peaceful period was likely to set in, and would be promoted by the probable betrothal of Rodogil to Ariac, who would ultimately succeed to the chieftainship of the Daliternians. Hethra, she informed me, was already promised in marriage to a Northern

chief, and that was the reason why she had not chosen to walk with any one of the many youths who that evening had sought her companionship. At this I observed that Hethra blushed and looked down; something in the conversation seemed to displease her, and she ran forward and joined some female acquaintances who were walking in front.

By-and-by the Tamenian chieftain came up with some of his attendants and joined the party of Dovna; I seized the opportunity of moving in advance to seek the company of Hethra; and, having found her at a difficult part of the way, where the members of the party required to scramble up one by one, I offered her my hand to aid her in climbing. Though she was agile as a gazelle, and able to outstrip most of her comrades, my help seemed not unwelcome to her, and for a considerable part of the way we walked side by side in playful and friendly converse. Hitherto I had been attracted only by the external grace and beauty of this mountain-nymph, as of some rare natural product—a beautiful flower or a splendid animal. I was prepared also to find her warm-hearted and high-spirited, as are most of the upper classes among semi-barbarous people; but she now gave evidence of other qualities which I did not expect. It appeared that the merchant Ambrax and his companions had frequently made Trenavia their headquarters, having sometimes passed a whole winter among the Tamenians, and from him she had learned much about Southern lands and peoples, and had acquired a thirst for knowledge. When two of her brothers had gone

to the island of Albion to be educated in the schools of the Druids, she had wept much because she was only a girl and was not permitted to accompany them, and to console her Ambrax had taught her the Grecian language and the use of Phœnician letters, which are now employed round all the coast of Javan. I told her many things concerning the customs of Egypt and my own country, and promised to instruct her in the letters and learning of those lands, and a warm friendship was rapidly springing up between us. It is wonderful how the heart can loosen the tongue and break through the barriers of an imperfectly acquired speech. I found myself speaking to her in the Alpian language with a fluency which surprised myself, encouraged by the friendly glances of her bright eyes, which shone like stars in the dimness of the night. I told her my history, my wanderings and my ambitions; and she was specially interested in my recital of two incidents in my life, namely, my adventure with Milzar in the cave of Manah, and the dream I had on my first night on the hermit's island. When I informed her how I was struck on first meeting her with the resemblance of her features to those of the vividly-remembered face of the genius Adina, who came to rescue me, she laughed merrily, as if much pleased, and often afterwards, by way of jest, she would call herself by the name of Adina.

Our pleasant intercourse was destined, however, to be rudely interrupted. At a rocky and precipitous part of the path, a dark figure suddenly loomed out against the dim sky, and an ominous growl an-

nounced the near presence of some enraged wild beast. 'A bear! a bear!' screamed the women, and the party was thrown into alarm and disorder. The animal, which was preparing to rush upon us, had been momentarily arrested by the shouts of two young men who were in front of us; and I had just time to bethink me that a new Phœnician invention for rapid fire-lighting might be now used with advantage. I had instantly out with my inflammable material, and, after some swift manipulation, I raised a great flame, with which I rushed boldly upon our grisly assailant. I had, however, to thrust it into his very face, till his hair was singed and his eyes must have smarted, before he turned and sullenly disappeared in the forest. After this the ranks of the processionists were arranged in closer order: the women walked under the guardianship of armed warriors, and young men with torches went ahead of the party as scouts, to keep a vigilant eye upon the thickets we passed.

At the top of the mountain was a sacred enclosure, surrounded by a circle of upright stones, and having at its centre, on the extreme summit, a stone tumulus called Keren, which, in the Syrian language, means a horn or eminence, whereon was built a great pile of faggots. Just inside this enclosure a row of white-robed priests took up their position; then, between the upright pillars, were placed chairs for the old chief Aramnes, his guests and the headmen of the tribe; and next to these were a circle of white-robed virgins, who formed a choir to assist the priests in chanting their hymns, behind them being musicians

who played upon rude instruments. I was honoured with a seat at the right hand of Aramnes, and opposite me on the other side of the enclosure, just behind where her father sat, I noted the face of my late companion, Hethra, who had donned a white stole and stood in the choir-circle.

First of all the fire was kindled on the tumulus by the Archdruid. I was told that formerly this was done by the chief of the tribe, who was the sole priest as well as patriarch of his people; but a new order of priests, called Druids, who derive their origin from Albion, had been brought in by Aramnes through the influence of his mother, who had sprung from the nation of the Brigones.

We had arrived at the mountain-top somewhat more than an hour before sunrise, and the time was occupied by the priests in marching round the fire and, accompanied by the musicians and the choir, in chanting hymns in honour of the sun. In the midst of these ceremonies a great commotion was created by the arrival of twelve strong men who came up the mountain carrying upon long poles a great cage, covered with twigs, withered moss, foliage, and other inflammable material. They were greeted with great cries on the part of the assembled populace, and the singing of the choir and the priests waxed louder as the bearers advanced and placed their burden upon the blazing pile. Then there arose a confused chorus of praying from the priests, mingled with shouting from the people. When I inquired what this meant, I was informed it was the sins of the people for the past year which were being

consumed in the fire: I supposed therefore that the cage, which had been thus brought up the mountain, contained animal victims, but, though the exact nature of the contents of the cage was always spoken of as a sacred mystery known only to the priests, I caught a glimpse of something that strongly resembled a human arm and hand writhing amid the flames, whence I inferred that the Alpian peoples, like the inhabitants of Canaan, offer human sacrifices to their gods.

The time of the extinction of the fire coincided almost exactly with that of the rising of the sun, which appeared in cloudless splendour above a neighbouring mountain-ridge. Then the band of priests raised a hymn to the rising sun, in the chorus of which all the musicians and spectators joined. Afterwards the whole company made their way to a level place further down the mountain, where preparations had been made for the festivities which followed, and where the whole tribe took part in feasting, dancing, and athletic games.

Journal Continued.

Sixth day of Addar (*February*).—I have not ceased to revolve in my mind the question as to the writer of the mysterious message brought to me a few weeks ago. I had written with a charred ember on the same piece of bark a few words in Greek begging the writer to reveal to me his or her name, and I had resolved to watch for the messenger and send my note by him; but for some nights he did not

return as usual, though, from the abundance of the last supply of food, I suffered nothing through hunger. Last night, however, the messenger returned at a moment when I was happily awake, and had my written message in readiness to put into his hand. I had inscribed on a piece of bark in the Greek language these words: 'My unknown benefactor, who hast befriended the lonely stranger in his prison-cell, and kept alive in him the flame of life and hope, I beseech thee, whoever thou art, to reveal to me thy name, that I may henceforth carry it deeply graven on my heart, and that I may mention it with the names of the divinities I adore.'

The night was not perfectly dark, and as I thrust the writing into the hand of the messenger I caught a faint glimpse of his features, which appeared to me strange, almost inhuman, and yet not wholly unfamiliar. I await with impatience his return with an answer to my request.

CHAPTER X.

THE STRONGHOLD OF BRANNUS.

I LEFT Dinamion early one summer morning to proceed by boat, in company with Ariac, towards the abode of Brannus. As this point lay directly on my route towards Albion, I took with me all my goods, which I embarked upon three skiffs propelled by the oars of some stout native boatmen. Our pathway was at first a reed-bordered lagoon, reminding me of the land of the Gambulites and the banks of the Nile, and, as we skirted some level ground on the shore of the lake, I was again reminded of the land of the Pharaohs by seeing patches of cultivated land bearing flax and Egyptian wheat.*

The great lake or inland sea on which we navigated is profound in some places beyond all human measurement, and, indeed, the natives declare that it has no bottom, but that it has secret passages leading directly to the underworld. It lies in the form of a half-moon between two lines of high rocky mountains, clothed with forest, some of which

* See Appendix, Note P.

descend almost precipitously to the water's edge, and far up their summits white masses of snow were glistening under the midsummer sun. Many fishing-boats were out, ploughing the calm surface of the water in various directions with long fan-like furrows. The edges of the lake were fringed at shallower parts with pile-dwellings which stood in the water, generally near promontories formed by Nature near the mouths of streams. The mountain-sides echoed with the wild cry of herdsmen, half harsh, half musical, and once I heard the shout of hunters mingled with the clamour of dogs and the hoarse, resounding bellow of an enraged bear. Ariac and I joined with our boatmen in singing songs, for we were both in a joyous mood in prospect of our visit to the home of Rodogil and of Hethra.

After seven hours' fast rowing we arrived at Trenavia, the chief town of the Tamenians, which stands at the mouth of a river called the Tama. The larger and more ancient part of the town, which is frequently called Trehenna, or the old town, stands upon a vast platform erected in the middle of the bay upon innumerable piles of wood. The inhabitants are a subject population, very industrious and active; and as we approached the town, we witnessed a scene of busy life which reminded us of a beehive. There was a continual coming and going of boats to and from the shore, bringing cattle and sheep, corn and merchandise, to provision the town; here were rafts of timber from the neighbouring forests being ferried across for building new houses, or for strengthening the supports of the

town, and there were fleets of fishing-boats dispersed upon the shining surface of the lake. The air was filled with the sounds of a busy population, mingled with the cry of lake-birds, which hovered about in immense flocks, wrangling and screaming, ever on the watch to pick up the offal of the town, the inhabitants of which do not disturb them, because they are thought to be spirits of the departed dead, the whiter ones being souls of the good, and the darker of the bad. Here was a party of men and women, tugging, like a party of ants, at some great tree-trunk, setting it on end, and staking it downwards into the mud; there was a party of children at play, the younger having strings attached to their feet to prevent them rolling off the platform. There was a confused commingled hum, amid which could be distinguished the clang of hammers, the rattle of falling planks, the barking of dogs and lowing of cattle, the shouting of workmen, and the screams and laughter of women.

The platforms are upwards of ten feet above the surface of the water, and the piles supporting them are usually about thirty feet in length, one-third of their length being imbedded in the mud, one-third standing in the water, and another rising above the surface. The houses, or *phalai*, are circular in shape, built of beams, wicker-work, and clay, and covered with a dome-shaped roof thatched with reeds or rushes. Some of the better-class houses or huts are ornamented in front by fantastic carving. I was astonished to think of the amazing industry required for the erection of these lake-

villages, especially considering that many of them are very ancient, and must have been built at a period when the only tools for cutting down and shaping the timber were stone hatchets.

Having left our boats at a landing-place in the boat-haven, Ariac and I made our way inland towards the fortress of Brannus, which stood upon an artificial eminence at a little distance off. On our way thither we passed through the newer town, called Trenavia, inhabited by the immediate retainers and warriors of the chieftain. Knowing that the ladies of the Alpian nobles had begun to despise the ruder materials in the shape of furs, leather, and plaited wool, which formed the staple of the wearing articles which were the native products of those regions, and that they were acquiring a taste for more refined garments imported by merchants from the South, and for ornaments of gold and silver and glass, such as bracelets, necklaces, and beads, I had brought with me, by the hand of our attendants, some Syrian garments and ornaments, which I hoped would win the fancy of the fair Hethra. Alas, for the fallacy of human hopes! That morning of joy was speedily overcast with clouds: there was sorrow in the mansion of Brannus that day. We were approaching the fortress, which stood on a high artificial eminence, defended by strong palisades, and overlooking the lake, when we were met by Rodogil, who must have been on the watch for us, and who greeted us with a smile of gladness. It was easy to note, however, that she was in some distress, for her eyes were red with recent weeping.

Brannus and his consort, Dovna, received us with a high courtesy and hospitality, natural to this people, yet with an expression of unwonted gravity, the cause of which was soon explained. In the absence of Brannus during the recent festivities at Dinamion, Armon, the eldest son of the chief, had been left in command; and one day, whilst on a distant hunting expedition, he had fallen into an ambuscade laid for him by the crafty Ligorix, and was even now lying a prisoner at the stronghold of that chief. The wily gaoler had now also increased his demands upon Brannus: not only did he seek the hand of Hethra in marriage, but he required that her father should break off alliance with the Daliternians, and, uniting forces with the Lygians, should declare war against Dinamion. Were these conditions not accepted, Armon was to be barbarously tortured and put to death. But another, and to me the worst, cause of the prevailing sorrow was yet to come: we were informed that Hethra herself had disappeared, and there was reason to fear that she, too, had fallen into the hands of the enemy. My heart sank at the tidings, and there was no more spirit left in me to display my treasures. The grim warrior Brannus himself was like an angry lion who is chained. He would gladly have marched against Ligorix; but that would have but sealed the doom of his son—perhaps also of Hethra. A messenger who had been sent to the Lygian chief had either been put to death or detained, and Brannus was now in a desperate mood.

After hearing the sad narrative, Ariac sprang up

and, denouncing Ligorix, declared that he would challenge him to settle the dispute by single combat. But the more sage mind of the chief checked the fiery ardour of the young man. Ligorix, he said, was not the man to be dealt with in such fashion; he was of too crafty and treacherous a spirit to consent to such a chivalrous course. All his counsellors, he said, had failed to help him in the difficulty, and at that very hour Cosbelin was alone in a sacred grove praying for light and guidance.

As I pondered the matter in silence, my heart told me that Hethra must be found and rescued, whatever peril it might involve for myself; and at length I opened my mouth, and said:

'O renowned chief, listen to me. I am indeed of the children of the distant East, from the clime of the sun and Edinnah, the garden of God; but I know this day that one heart is in all men, and since I have come to this beautiful land of mountain and lake my soul is knit with the soul of thy people, as if I were of your brethren. I am here in the guise of a simple merchant, yet I have stood in the presence of mighty kings, and I am sent on weighty business from Merodach-Baladan, greatest of monarchs. I have encountered many dangers in my time, and have been brought unscathed through many desperate adventures. It is clear that if you go to war with this evil man, whatever may be the issue, it will not deliver your son; nor will any Tamenian messenger be received by him. There is but one way left: craft must be met with craft. Let a spy be sent to the stronghold of Ligorix to

discover if Hethra, your daughter, is there. And who can be found that is qualified for such a mission? Who so fit as one whose heart is with the heart of thy people, and who, going as a foreign merchant for the avowed object of selling his wares, would be least of all open to suspicion? Wherefore, O chief, let me, I pray thee, go on this thine errand, taking no one with me, save only a porter or two to carry my goods, and to guide me on the way to the dwelling-place of this chief. If the gods give me good speed I shall return quickly, bringing back what news I have gathered—if, indeed, I may not be enabled by my god Merodach to do something more for the deliverance of thy son and daughter.'

This speech found favour with the family of Brannus, and I saw that the chief himself began to regard me with greater respect; for, as those noble barbarians despise all callings save that of the warrior—unless, indeed, it be that of their Druid priests—I well knew that I had hitherto found small favour in his eyes. Whilst Brannus was still in doubt, the priest Cosbelin returned, and announced that the matter could not be clearly decided except by lot, which is an ordinary way of consulting the divine oracle among this people. Now, this is the manner in which they proceed in this matter: First of all, the Druids proceed to a holy grove, where they cut certain square pieces from an oak, which is a tree sacred to their supreme deity; some hieroglyphic marks are then cut out upon the bark of the several pieces, which are thrown together into a white cloth held by two Druids; next, the presiding

priest prays to the gods to direct his hand, and so to decide the question at issue; then, being blindfolded, he three times lifts out a chip, which is read and interpreted from the characters thereon inscribed. If the same chip is drawn twice, the mind of the deity is held to be sufficiently ascertained.*

In this case the pieces of wood were four in number, and were inscribed each with a different device, one representing war, another a single combat, a third a commercial transaction, and the fourth a foreign messenger, meaning my proposed visit. This mode of pictorial writing on bark reminded me of the hieroglyphs employed in very ancient times in the East, and is known among the Tamenians by a name signifying *secret writing*. The lots were cast into the cloth and three times drawn, when it was declared that the gods had decreed that I should go to the stronghold of Ligorix upon this errand.

As I was anxious to set out as soon as possible, preparations were forthwith made for carrying out my plan. It was deemed best that I should not travel by the direct route from Trenavia; therefore, that same evening, taking with me a bale of merchandise, I was conveyed by some swift rowers some leagues to the eastward, and landed at the chief town of the Faibians, a small independent tribe with whom I staid all night. Thence it was only one day's journey to the abode of Ligorix; so, starting in the early morning, and taking with me some Faibian porters, I journeyed northwards along the lofty

* See Appendix, Note Q.

banks of a pleasant stream, through a country of hills and dense forests. I should not forget to mention one member of the party, the only Tamenian who accompanied me. This was a dwarf named Cobi, a half-witted creature, who was kept by the family of Brannus for the sake of his pleasantries and amusing pranks. I had already seen him at the Daliternian festival, where he had, in the evening, played some fantastic tricks to the amusement of the company, and my suspicion that he was less foolish than he seemed was abundantly confirmed in course of that expedition. Being too well known in that neighbourhood from his quaint appearance and gestures, I had him disguised by putting on him an Oriental robe bearing the shapes of dragons and demons, darkening his skin, and making other changes, whereby his appearance was completelv altered whilst made still more grotesque.

When I arrived, after a fatiguing journey, at the capital of the Lygians, I speedily noted, amid the signs of rough plenty and prosperity everywhere apparent, that the settlement proclaimed a lower stage of barbarism than the towns of the Tamenians and Daliternians: the rude and filthy huts; the wild-looking inhabitants, who went about half naked or clad only in skins; and the very dogs, which seemed fiercer and more savage than elsewhere. The people spoke a language that was unintelligible to me. Most of the men seemed to be armed with axes and lances whose heads were of polished stones, though I noticed a party of wandering smiths engaged at an open-air forge in sharpening

and repairing weapons of bronze. In a shed or booth which I passed I saw some slaves employed in rudely ornamenting, with spiral and other lines graved with a sharpened stick, some vases of hand-made pottery; and further on some were grinding meal by rolling a round boulder in the hollow of a rough block of stone, and others, again, were busy shaping and sharpening arrow-points and lance-heads from flint. Most of the populace had a tone of fawning servility and treachery which I mistrusted, and crowded and hustled me with childish grimaces, as if I were some outlandish creature who had dropped down from the moon. They inquisitively examined my clothes, the women especially, and they were astonished at the quality of my finely-woven garments, which I thought they would have pulled off my back. With difficulty they were prevented from seizing my goods, which the porters were carrying. A sickening odour exhaled from the bodies and dwellings of these savages, and I was heartily glad on arriving at the precincts of the stronghold of their chief, when a party of armed guards came and drove back the crowd, and took possession of the merchandise.

The stronghold was perched on a height, and surrounded by triple palisaded ramparts, through which I and my attendants were led very much like prisoners of war. The chief Ligorix was a true barbarian, strongly built, surly and insolent in bearing, and swaggering in gesture. His eyes, which were the worst part of his face, were sensuous, suspicious and pig-like; his imposing figure and his features,

in spite of their coarseness of expression, had a certain savage grandeur; and altogether his animal counterpart would have been something between the lion and the wild-boar.

The hall into which we were ushered was a long low-roofed apartment built of logs, with the exception of the fireplace and chimney, which were made of dried clay. The walls were covered with weapons and barbaric ornaments, and there was an appearance of rough plenty about the place which I was prepared to find in the abode of the leader of a powerful confederacy of tribes.

When I told the chief my mercantile object, and the country whence I had come, he was very inquisitive in regard to the route by which I had travelled and the goods I had brought with me, and after I had showed my wares, and presented him with a handsome garment, he ordered a repast to be prepared in my honour.

I had brought with me from the Grecian islands a few flasks of wine, which I knew by experience to be one of the most tempting baits to those barbarians. I had taken the liberty of mixing with it a certain Egyptian drug, of somnific virtues, whose effects were slow and gradual, and I also carried with me a powder prepared by Egyptian physicians, which I knew to be an antidote to this drug. This precaution was a necessary one, for when in the midst of the feast I ordered my attendant, Cobi, to produce the flasks of wine, the crafty chieftain declared that, as a mark of honour to me as his guest, he wished me to be the first to partake of the wine.

After I had imbibed a considerable draught, he let a certain space of time elapse, and then, apparently reassured, he produced a two-handled and double-lipped Grecian cup, which I filled, and from which he invited me to quaff the draught of guest friendship simultaneously with himself. In obedience to the command of Ligorix, there was a good deal of dancing, singing, and tricks of buffoonery performed by some of his people for his own amusement and mine; and my temporary follower, Cobi, also exhibited some fantastic tricks which were highly appreciated. He posed as a mute, all his performances being in dumb show, and all would have gone well but for one unlucky circumstance. Cobi had a weakness for the common native beverage called mead,* which was very intoxicating in its character, and he could never resist its temptation; and on this occasion mead was flowing plentifully among the retainers of Ligorix whilst their betters were being served with Grecian wine. I had foreseen no risk from his partaking of this drink among his fellows; but once, during a lull of the storm of boisterous mirth which reigned in the hall of Ligorix, I overheard among the mingled voices from an inner apartment what seemed to be the guttural tones of my mute jester. Of this, however, I was not certain, though I was disquieted by whispered messages carried from time to time by some of the cup-bearers and attendants to the chief, and by certain changes of mood which seemed to pass over him as he looked at me. Nor was this disquietude lessened by the

* See Appendix, Note Q.

fact that his attentions to me as guest became more demonstratively friendly than before, for in all this I perceived something forced and unnatural.

There was one page or cup-bearer of the chief who specially drew my attention by his smart figure, deft alacrity, and quiet, modest demeanour. He seemed like a perfect automaton, who moved in instinctive obedience to the unuttered will of the chief, and seemed conscious of or concerned with nothing beside. I was the more astonished, therefore, when this youth, in serving an under-chieftain who sat near me, took advantage of a noisy chorus then in progress to whisper words in my ear which gave me a momentary shock of surprise:

'Do not drink the next cup of mead that is to be offered you,' said he. 'It is poisoned.'

For a moment my mind reeled, and somehow the horror of the dark hour I passed years before in the embrace of Manah was conjured up, and I breathed a brief prayer to Merodach. Once more I felt as if caught in some dread trap, out of which it seemed impossible to return alive. I surmised what turned out to be too true: my selection of the dwarf Cobi as my henchman had been too hasty and ill considered; he had fallen a victim to intoxication, and his tongue had been loosened to speak, not in the language of Tyre or of Chaldea, but in that of Trenavia. His identity as the dwarf slave of Brannus had been discovered; the suspicious Ligorix had scented some plot in our secret mission, and, to ensure himself against any harm coming out of it, he had given orders that I should be poisoned.

The fatal cup was presented to me, and I felt as if all eyes were fixed upon me, and that Ligorix and his barbaric courtiers were breathlessly watching to see what would follow. That cup, with its harmless-looking yet deadly fluid, exercised a strange fascination upon me. It is strange how keenly alive at such a moment the mind can be to trivial details. I noted, from its make and pattern, that the cup had probably been imported from the Grecian Isles, where its kind is very plentiful, though it is commonest of all at Argos and Mycenæ. It was composed of earthenware of a clear green colour, ornamented with black spiral rings; it stood upon a disc-like foot, and its longish stalk expanded at the top into a cup more wide than deep, with a curved handle at one side. For a moment I fingered a talisman against sickness, pestilence, and poison, which was suspended from my neck, and then I clearly saw the plan which alone held out hope of escape. It was not in vain I had learnt some tricks of Egyptian magic to beguile the tedium of my bondage on the banks of the Nile. I was familiar with the sleight-of-hand contrivance for seemingly drinking a cup of wine, and then refilling the vessel with the identical liquid, which had been emptied into a specially-prepared receptacle in the sleeve, and though I had no such receptacle, yet, as it was unnecessary to produce the same liquid again, the trick promised to serve my purpose. I first of all made a show of drinking to the health and prosperity of Ligorix and his house—a compliment which he seemed hardly to appreciate, for he hastily

kissed an amulet of bronze in the shape of the solar disc; and while he was so occupied I pretended to drink the liquid, which satisfactorily disappeared down my sleeve. Not one of the spectators seemed to suspect that I had duped them, though many eyes were so intently watching me that a sigh of escaping breaths broke forth when I set the empty cup on the table. The first face that caught my feverish glance, as I looked up through the cloud of mingled steam from the hot mead and smoke from the pine-torches with which the hall was lighted, was that of the youth who had so lately warned me. Horror and disappointment were printed upon his features and his staring eyes. I was arrested by the look, and still more by the striking features, which it seemed I ought to recognise; but in another instant he turned away and walked from the apartment.

It now behoved me to act my part skilfully, for I saw that my host and his followers, though they made a noisy pretence of attending to other matters, were still watching to see what would be the effect of the fatal draught. Erelong I began to lean my head upon my hand, as if I were taken with a sudden sickness; then, as if bracing myself with an effort, I begged the chief to excuse me, and let me be shown to my sleeping-quarters. Although thus feigning sickness, I was vigilant enough to notice sundry looks and nods of covert intelligence passing between Ligorix and his attendants, as if to say: 'Our affair proceeds satisfactorily; he will be a dead man in a few hours.' On my own side I did not fail to observe that their eyes were growing heavy

and their vision cloudy, and I said to myself: 'My affair proceeds satisfactorily; you will be all asleep in a few hours.'

After retiring to rest, I lay on the rude couch that had been prepared for me, and uttered an occasional groan. For a time I could hear hurried steps, mingled with the sounds of subsiding revelry, and all the while I kept my hand upon the hilt of my dagger, prepared to sell my life as dear as possible in case of attack; but by-and-by, as the sounds grew fainter, a strange stillness came upon the household. I began to tremble with nervous excitement, for I felt that something behoved to be done to get me out of this deadly trap, and I knew that the hour to do it had come. The moon had risen, and was shining through a loophole in the roof of my chamber, throwing a clear beam of light athwart the darkness, and casting upon the opposite wall what seemed to my excited mind the fantastic image of a death's-head. My heart stood suddenly still as I heard at the door of the room the sound of muffled steps, followed by a gentle tapping. Ere I could proceed to parley with the visitor, the door opened, and a dim figure entered the room with stealthy step, and, after advancing a few paces, paused irresolutely in the middle of the floor just where the moon's rays streamed across the apartment. The face thus illumined proved to be that of the friendly page who had warned me against the poison. The flushed features wore a shy, scared expression, and the short, panting breath spoke of excitement or recent exertion. A sudden flash of intelligence entered my

spirit and gave me a great shock of surprise, and I sprang up and seized my visitor's hand to find assurance that this was no mere nightmare vision. The hand was soft and warm and human, and I well recognised its touch, whilst at the same moment a timid, pleading glance was cast upon me from the uplifted eyes.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PAGE OF LIGORIX.

UNDER her cleverly contrived disguise I had recognised Hethra, whose eyes fell bashfully under my gaze.

'O Simran!' she exclaimed, 'art thou still alive? I feared lest surely thou hadst drunk the cup of death. Blessed be the guardian deities who have preserved thee! I am Hethra: anxiety to rescue my brother led me hither in disguise, and now or never is the time to make the attempt, when Ligorix and his guards are drowned in sleep.'

'Alas!' I exclaimed, 'how could we hope to pass through the guarded gates and palisades?'

'I have secured a way of retreat,' said she; 'I have drugged the drunken gatekeepers, and I have drawn the bolts. But thou wilt not attempt to escape without helping me to rescue Armon?'

'Bravest of maidens!' I exclaimed, 'what dost thou take me for? I have come hither for the very purpose of aiding thee; but where can we find thy brother Armon?'

'Follow me,' she whispered, 'but softly, cautiously; beware of awaking the slumbering guards who lie strewn about.'

So laying my left hand upon the shoulder of the damsel for guidance in the darkness, and grasping a naked poniard in the other, as a blind man who is led by a child I followed her through the labyrinthine passages of that dreadful house, where all was now silent save for the stertorous breathing of the sleepers, which sounded like a prolonged chorus of hogs. We went slowly and cautiously through various passages, sometimes stepping over the body of a drunken sleeper, till, passing down a few steps, we came to the trap-door which overlay the mouth of the dungeon. On approaching it, Hethra whispered the name of her brother, who answered her from beneath; and then, to my bewilderment and alarm, she addressed some rapid monitory words to a fourth person whom I could not distinguish in the dark. The trap-door was composed of rough cross-bars kept down by a great stone which was beyond my strength to lift; but as I was struggling with it, I felt two other hands placed alongside of mine—not the hands of Hethra, for they were rough and covered with hair, almost like the paws of a wild animal, and in two or three seconds the stone was removed and we lifted the trap-door. I and my unknown helper, whom I regarded as some friendly demon, stretched down each a hand to the prisoner below, whom we raised up till his elbows rested on the edge of the trap, and he then sprang up with agility from the dungeon in which he had been nine days immured.

It was not till we were clear out of the hold that I recognised by the dim starlight the squat form of Cobi, who formed the fourth member of the party. Hethra had with difficulty awakened him from his drunken sleep, and without his help — for this dwarf had more than ordinary strength—it is probable that our object would have failed. Our chief danger, after passing into the open air, was now from the dogs of the neighbourhood, which, as I said, are peculiarly fierce and savage; and, indeed, although we sought to escape by by-ways, we did not get clear of the village without a great clamour being raised by the dogs; yea, at one place we were attacked by a crowd of them, and it required our united efforts to escape from their fury. When the first light of dawn came on, we made our way into a forest which clothed the neighbouring mountain-side, along which we pursued our course all day, keeping ever in the direction of the Tamenian country.

Great was the surprise and joy of the Tamenians when we arrived at Trenavia. Hethra, as the heroine of the hour, was greeted with extravagant demonstrations of welcome by those warm-hearted barbarians when they learnt the brave part she had played in rescuing her brother. Her father, Brannus, gently chiding her for the rashness with which she had exposed herself to danger, asked:

'What if your identity had been discovered whilst you were under the power of that ogre? Did you not think of that when going unprotected into his den?'

'Yea,' replied the bold maiden, 'I thought of it, and I provided against that risk; behold my protector;' and she drew from her bosom a dagger, wherewith she had resolved to take either the life of Ligorix or her own in case her identity had been discovered.

The voice of war now sounded through Tamenia. News had come in that Ligorix was summoning his savage confederates to arms, and that a great horde of Lygians was gathering on the outskirts of the Tamenian territory. Nothing was now heard in Trenavia and Trehenna but songs of defiance, the clang of weapons, and the tramp of armed men. Beacons flashed messages by night from one side of the lake to the other, and boatloads of Daliternian and Tylangian warriors, the allies of Brannus, began to arrive. Bands of stately barbarians landed under the leadership of their chiefs, and mustered on a field to the east of Trenavia. From the appearance of these men, even a stranger could perceive that, though the Tamenians had sprung from the island of Albion, whilst their allies had no tradition of an insular origin, they were essentially of the same stock, and their language differed only in dialect. With the exception of some contingents drawn from the subject population, they were of a tall, fair-haired and blue-eyed race, and nowhere, even among the Amorites or the Achæans, had I seen more formidable and stately ranks. They march to battle, as they live in their villages, banded according to kinship, each band of a hundred men being

led by the head of that cognate branch of the tribe or his representative.

The warriors carried shields of wicker-work covered with folds of cowhide, and their heads were protected by helmets made of the skin of thick-furred animals. The headgear of the chiefs was the hide flayed from the heads of certain animals, of which the horns and ears were left in their places—a covering which lent a savage grotesqueness to their appearance. Some of the best warriors were equipped with battle-axes of bronze or of flint, the heads being fastened to the handles in the Egyptian manner. Some ranks were armed with bronze-headed spears, but many others with ashen pikes tipped with bone or flint, or even simply with points hardened by fire. Others of the men were armed with bows and arrows, javelins, and slings; and the chieftains carried bronze swords hanging at their girdles.

The Druid priests of the Tamenians were busily occupied in sacrificing and performing other religious rites, with the purpose of rousing the warlike enthusiasm of the men; and all who died in battle were promised a place of honour and felicity in the world to come. When the mustered squadrons began their march, a warlike hymn was led by the Druid priests, in which the warriors joined; and certain women and maidens marched before the host, dancing wild measures and singing weird strains with a religious frenzy which reminded me of the armed Amazonian priestesses of the Hittite goddess Atargates or Nana. It is their custom each year at

May-time to select a leading Druidess who shall be queen of the warlike chorus ; but the queen for the year being unable through sickness to join the troops, Hethra was substituted in her place. I myself, armed with sword and battle-axe, marched in the company of Ariac, and, being near the head of the host, I had a full view of the chorus of the women ; and though I preferred Hethra in the winsome simplicity of her every-day manner, yet I could not but mark with admiration how the high spirit of her martial race had on this occasion kindled her beauty to a brilliant lustre, and transformed her for the time into a very winsome young Bellona.

The opposing armies met upon a level heath, which was somewhat broken by protruding rocks and brushwood, and the fray began amid immense uproar and fury. I cannot describe the progress of the battle, for very early in its course I was struck by a sling-stone, which flew with vast impetus against my forehead, and I lay stunned on the field all the time of the conflict.

When I recovered consciousness, I found myself lying in a hut, whilst my head was being bathed by two Tamenian women, whom Hethra was anxiously superintending and assisting. They applied medicinal herbs to the wound, chanting incantations the while, and finally they bandaged my head. I was informed that the Lygians had been defeated after a fierce conflict, and that the main body of the allied army was still in pursuit of them. I could hear the far-off shouts of victory, mingled with the protracted

wail of women over the slain. Along with many others of the wounded, I was carried on a hurdle to Trenavia, and, whilst the most of the warriors were still away in course of completing the campaign, I was carefully tended in the stronghold of Brannus. Often at this time I debated whether it would not be a happy lot to settle here, and teach the arts of civilized life to these warlike, intelligent barbarians; but I reflected that the mission entrusted to me by my countrymen lay upon me as a sacred duty, and that, until it were successfully accomplished, every other consideration must yield to this. One day, however, being now convalescent, I was advised by the medicine-man who attended me to go upon the lake for change of air; a large canoe was provided for the occasion, and I was made to recline upon a couch of furs. Hethra and a female attendant accompanied me, and an elderly boatman steered the skiff. Whilst gliding along the smooth surface of the lake, as I lay looking up to the blue sky, with only a passing sea-fowl or two visible, beside the face of Hethra, who bent over me like a kind tutelary genius, we began to amuse ourselves by conversing in the Greek language, in which she was fairly proficient. I told her of my country, and of other lands I had known; we talked of my present mission, and of my probable return in a year or two; I spoke of my plans for the future, saying if this enterprise succeeded I might try to establish an overland trade through the Alpian lands, as well as the sea-trade by means of Phœnician ships, and I might make my home partly in Tyre and partly in

Alpia, or at Atria. I said I had been hitherto as the sea-weed, drifted to and fro by the waves, but by-and-by I hoped to take root somewhere, and make for myself a home. I asked her if she could cast in her lot with such an adventurer as I, and cheer his lonely path of life; 'for ever since mine eyes looked upon thee,' I said, 'my heart has turned to thee as the eye of the Phœnician mariner to the Polar star.' She bent her head, and her face was as the dawn as she answered:

'If you can but gain my father's consent, I will follow thee to the end of the world.'

The war having been finished, Brannus interested himself in my preparations for the journey to Albion, and did what he could to further the project. One of his Druids drew, at his dictation, upon a square of wood certain mystic markings, including some symbolic representation of myself and my mission, to be shown to certain chiefs of the tribes of Brigones, through whose country I should pass. Better still, it turned out that several youths, sons of neighbouring chiefs, desired to go to Albion to be educated in the schools of the Druids, and asked to be allowed to accompany me. This proved to be the best passport I could have taken with me on my journey, for it was esteemed the greatest dishonour among those peoples to refuse to extend the privilege of guest-friendship to passing travellers, but, above all, to refuse hospitality to those youths who year by year passed to and from the Druidical schools of Albion. At the last moment I was gladdened by the arrival of Ariac at Trenavia, and by his

announcement that he meant to accompany me. Before setting out, I had an interview with Brannus, who gave me a present to carry to his cousin Colban, a chieftain among the Tamenians of Albion, who would, without doubt, show me kindness for his sake. When I asked if he would allow me, on my return to Trenavia, to take his daughter Hethra to wife, the haughty chieftain replied that he had other prospects in view for her, and had promised her to the son of a neighbouring chieftain—a youth who had greatly distinguished himself in the recent campaign. I offered to double the purchase-price that would be given him by any neighbouring chief, mentioning at the same time the prospect of wealth and honour in store for me, as the result of my success in this enterprise. Brannus laughingly responded, using a current mode of speech in his country, that one fish in the basket was worth twenty in the water. He declared, further, that he could not brook the idea of bestowing his daughter upon a foreigner; and, as he proved inflexible on the point, there was nothing left for me but to say a sorrowful adieu to Hethra. I contrived to have one more interview with the damsel. We met under cloud of night in the oak-grove, which is the temple of their supreme god. I found I had reckoned too hastily on her submissiveness to her father's authority. Her high spirit was roused in opposition. She had found out that her father had been contracting with Dinwalda, chief of the Tylangians, to bestow her upon a son of this prince; and she declared that she hated the youth, and would

rather die than be the wife of any but the man she loved. She said that though her own people were very proud, yet she knew them to be but rude barbarians, in comparison with the Greeks and my own nation, and that in my presence she felt that she herself and her people knew nothing. She had also a great desire to mix with more civilized peoples, and learn the manners and arts of the Grecian and Phœnician women. She threatened, if her father pushed her to extremities, to flee to a remote, inaccessible part of the mountains, where a faithful old nurse of her childhood resided, who would keep her in hiding till I should return.

I set out on my journey from Trenavia to Albion on the fourteenth day of the month Ululu, having been altogether seven weeks in the lake country. My companions, including guides and armed attendants, numbered twenty, all young and active men, and we were provided with a number of stout oxen to carry us and our luggage. The journey towards the north-western sea was a long and dreadful one. The route lay sometimes through forests, dismal, interminable, abounding with wild beasts and lurking robbers, the haunt of nameless monsters and demons—a true region of the shadow of death. Sometimes we passed over mountains, and anon skirted stagnant rivers and dangerous morasses. It would have been impossible for a party of strangers to the country to find the way; but our guides knew the routes taken by invading tribes, who generally come from the northwards, because the sunny Southern lands attract the Northern races

more than do the cold Northern climes the Southern men. Oftentimes we found the pathways well cleared and trampled by recent forays, in which some tribe had driven away the cattle from a neighbouring territory. At length we began to pass over a great plain where are many villages, whose warlike population were apt to be troublesome; but usually the name and passport of Brannus were honoured by the headman of the district, and we were allowed to pass on after bestowing a small present and receiving hospitable entertainment for the night. Often we found the men of some village engaged in a drunken brawl; for these barbarians are fierce, boastful, and quarrelsome, especially when drinking. In the vicinity of the strongholds of the great chieftains, which were either pile-dwellings planted in an inaccessible marsh, defended by a moat and palisades, or were pitched upon a lofty eminence, there were some signs of dawning civilization: agriculture was practised on a small scale, war-horses and chariots were employed, and bronze weapons and tools were used. At length we came to a large river which flowed towards the ocean in the direction of our route, and, embarking on rafts of timber, we followed its windings for many days, until at last we reached the sea at the coast of the Morianu. Here I bargained with traders who cross over to the island of Albion in little ships called corracks, constructed of hides and wicker-work, very like those I had seen on the Euphrates. These barks are very light and swift, but as they are easily overset and swamped in stormy weather,

the passage is a very dangerous one. We offered prayers and sacrifices for our safe conveyance, and then we entrusted ourselves to that unknown and perilous sea.

A favourable breeze blew from the south-east, and our voyage, from the time of setting sail to that of landing on the coast of the great island of Albion, took nearly two days and two nights. In that mysterious outer sea many barks, similar to those in which we sailed, were flitting to and fro like sea-birds across the blue expanse. I was told that mystic barks pass nightly over this sea, conveying the spirits of the dead westward to the realm of Sid,* the abode of the blessed immortals, whose trees bear golden fruits, and whose crystal domes and battlements can be faintly descried from the shores of Albion when the sunset sky is calm and clear. Taking advantage of the presence of two Tamenians of Albion on board our corrack, I beguiled the tedium of the voyage by practising their speech, which differs but little from that of the Alpian lake-people. I was glad to learn from them that the ruling chieftain of Tamenia was a man of generous, hospitable disposition and of superior intelligence, named Ardorix, who lived at an inland town called Dinasko, and who gave encouragement to foreign merchants to trade with his people. From such a ruler I was likely to receive encouragement and help in the important project which brought me to Albion.

* The ancient Irish paradise, the legendary kingdom of Tethra.

CHAPTER XII.

FIRST GLIMPSES OF ALBION.

ON the morning of the tenth day of the month Arah-samna (October) we had approached at unawares the coast of Albion. Some spell seemed laid upon the deep, which was strangely still, and everything was shrouded by a dense fog, out of which came voices of men and lowing of cattle, as from some unseen enchanted island. By-and-by, when the bank of cloud broke up and dispersed, we found ourselves in a sheltered bay lying within a stone-cast of the shore, where a crowd of natives speedily collected to watch our disembarking. In their appearance and dress, along with the fierceness of their gestures and gesticulations, this people, who evidently regarded me with awe, as something hardly human, impressed me as being the wildest type of mankind I had yet seen.* Nevertheless, I deemed it wonderful that the natives of this Hyperborean island, which appeared to lie beyond the bounds of the habitable world, were of

* See Appendix, Note R.

no monstrous type, but were rather—I mean those of the upper or ruling class—of a tall and handsome race. In colour they are the fairest of all men, and this, to my eyes, gave them at the first a sickly appearance, like that of plants which have grown up without sunlight; yet withal they are a people of robust and warlike character.

After landing, I made diligent inquiry among the natives, through the medium of my fellow-voyagers who spoke their language, whether aught had been heard on those coasts this year of the arrival of Yakin and his vessels; but though certain of the natives spoke in a confused manner regarding the arrival some years before of two great mysterious ships of some foreign people—the ships of Tobal, the Phœnician, I make no doubt*—they could give no information in regard to any similar vessels having arrived within recent months.

We made no delay in starting upon our inland journey towards Dinasko, the residence of the king, or head-chieftain, of the Tamenian nation; and as we proceeded on our route, the day brightened and the sun shone out, so that I was better able to discern the character of the country and its inhabitants, both of which appeared alike savage. The country is covered with forests, morasses, and brushwood, diversified with clearings of fertile pasture-land. The warrior class of the population are tall, fair-haired men, whose fierce blue eyes glared upon us from the doors of low, smoky huts, as if we were some singular prodigy or portent of

* See p. 93.

evil; the lower orders are dark-haired, black-eyed, and of middle stature, and these belong to the great Western race of Iberians, their dwellings being chiefly underground pits, whence we often saw them mysteriously emerge like conies from their burrows. These last were usually employed in tending cattle, sheep, and swine; they wore black tunics fastened round their bodies with a girdle; they carried long staffs, and talked with fierce gestures, and their hair was shaggy and unkempt as that of the cattle they pastured.

Erelong we heard disquieting rumours of revolution at Dinasko, and of the death of Ardorix. Happily, however, we found on our arrival that the commotion caused by the violent death of the chief had subsided, and that his relative, Malgon, had taken unopposed possession of the chieftainship.

Many of the tribes in this Hyperborean island live, like the Alpian lake-people, in pile-dwellings built in the midst of lakes. Generally, however, the lacustrine houses in Albion are reared upon artificial islands, instead of having upright piles to raise them above the surface of the water. In the construction of those islands there is first of all a layer of timber, consisting of logs laid down horizontally and mortised into vertical beams fixed in the mud; next to this comes a deep layer of brushwood and branches, surmounted by a stratum of gravel; finally, there is a layer of stones rising above the surface of the lake, and showing a smooth platform, on which the wooden houses are built. In the lake of Dinasko,

the residence of the chief, there are half a dozen artificial islands with numerous habitations.

When we arrived at Dinasko, Malgon, the new chieftain, was engaged celebrating with great pomp the obsequies of his predecessor. My companion, Ariac, chanced to meet among the retainers of the late chief a young Alpian of his acquaintance, who privately informed him that Malgon had himself contrived the death of Ardorix, and that his accession boded evil for the peace of the nation, seeing that he was a man of tyrannical and vicious disposition. The pompous funeral rites paid by him to his predecessor were but a blind to cover his own share in the murder of Ardorix. This information was not reassuring to us; but, having prepared a costly present for the new chief, I set out in company of Ariac to the spot where the funeral rites were in progress. As we were unable to get an audience with Malgon at the time, we waited to see the ceremonies rendered on behalf of the dead. A funeral pyre had been built of inflammable pine-logs and branches on the summit of a mound. The body of the dead chieftain was laid upon it, arrayed in complete military costume, and holding in his right hand a branch of mistletoe, which was supposed to be a passport to guide him to the land of happy immortals.* Placed beside him on the funeral pyre were the bodies of one or two favourite attendants, along with that of his most-loved wife, who had willingly given herself for the sacrifice; for I was assured that there is oftentimes a strife among

* See Appendix, Note S.

the wives of chieftains for the honour of accompanying their husband to the underworld. Also two oxen had been slaughtered, and their bodies laid upon the wood to be burnt; for these people believe that very fierce dogs guard the entrance to the palace of Tethra, and the departing spirits need to drive cows in front of them to divert the fury of the hounds of the underworld.

Before the funeral pyre was lighted by Malgon, as the chief male representative of the dead, a bard of the nation recited the lineage of Ardorix as sprung from the conquerors of Albion who had come across the Eastern Sea; also the great deeds of the departed were rehearsed; and then, as the funeral pyre was kindled, the Druid priests chanted hymns to expedite the separation of the spirit from its material envelopment. The following lines* express somewhat of the meaning of one of those hymns:

'Awake from thy slumber, O Fire: arise to thy priestly function.
All-pervading spirit that lurks in the bosom of matter,
Mysterious effluence breathed by the quickening breath of Huan!
Now as a quivering terror hung in the startled heavens,
Thou art an angry bolt from the red right hand of Taranis;
Now as a homeborn slave, working with friendly deftness,
Thou doest the daily tasks of mortals in hall or cottage;
Thou art the sacred shrine and bond of the family homestead.
Awake to the latest service for him, the departed hero,
Who cannot join his sires until thou speed his journey.
* * * * *
Gently deal with the dead; touch but his grosser members;
Loosen the bonds that confine him to his earth-prison.
His spirit thou canst not harm—birthless, deathless, thy kinsman,
Hidden like thee in matter, a ray from the region of light.
* * * * *

* See Appendix, Note T.

Benign All-mother, receive this child again to thy bosom ;
We leave him within thy breast until the morn of awaking.
Rest, O shade, in thy lair—come not again to affright us !
We shall accord thee duly food and drink in their season ;
Lie in thy native soil, till on thy new-birth morning
Thou shalt awake with smiles and look again on the sunrise.

* * * * *

Spirit, soar away, spurn the fetters that bound thee ;
Go by the beaten path through the dark forest of Oorlu ;
Follow the unseen path which all the fathers have trodden ;
Pass with the setting sun over the western ocean,
Where the mystic bark already awaits thy embarkment
To bear thee away to Sid, the radiant kingdom of Tethra.
Thou shalt return no more to Dinasko, thy well-loved mansion.
We shall behold thee no more till the sea gives up her dead.'

When the fire was extinct, some of the dead man's ashes and bones were collected in an urn, to be deposited in a funeral mound which had been the burial-place of his line for several generations. I was informed that the custom of burning the bodies had not been long introduced in Albion, the dead having been previously interred in their ordinary clothing, with their arms beside them ; but I did not learn why or by whom the later practice had been inaugurated. What was strangest of all was that the funeral mound, or cairn, had been constructed as a rude symbolic representation of a female—that is, of Earth, the All-mother ;* for the dead, who formerly were inhumed in the attitude of an unborn infant, are expected to reissue from the portal which faces the east and the rising sun.

The funeral feast threatened to be protracted for many days, and Malgon and his immediate attendants were in a too drunken and muddled condition to give much heed to my project. As the early

* See Appendix, Note U.

winter of those Northern lands was approaching, I began to be afraid lest my undertaking should have to lie over to another year. The Alpian youths who had accompanied me had gone away to the Druidical seminary, situated in a district to the east of the Tamenian country. Only Ariac was left with me, and, finding that the tin region of the island lay at no great distance, we resolved to go off and explore it privately. First of all, however, we left in safe hands, as we supposed, the present which I had prepared for the chieftain. In a few days we reached the centre of the tin region, which rejoiced my spirit by the evidence everywhere afforded of abundance of that coveted metal. There only remained the question of arrangements for opening and working the tin-mines, and of the arrival of Yakin's ships, to make my expedition a great success.

When we reached Dinasko on our return journey, we found Malgon and his attendant chiefs newly emerged from their drunken stupor, and in a very surly humour. When he found out where we had been, he was in a towering rage, because we had gone off without his consent. I bethought me of the present which I had left behind me, hoping thereby to appease the anger of the chief; but to my dismay I found it had disappeared, and those to whom we had given it in charge had vanished with it. Worst of all, I had exhausted my store of goods, and had nothing else to present. On this account the avaricious tyrant, angry at losing the valuable present he had expected to receive, and, as I suspect, wishing also to gain time for a thorough inspection

of the metallic treasures of the region which we had visited, ruthlessly seized upon me and shut me up in this prison-cage, whilst Ariac was sent back to his native land to fetch thence a present as valuable as that which had been stolen from us.

Journal Continued.

My doubts have been finally resolved. Last night I was visited by my benefactress in person, who, as I had long suspected, proved to be no other than Hethra herself. Shortly after midnight, as I lay wrapt in a profound sleep, I was awakened by a whisper which strangely thrilled me, and, proceeding to the loophole of my cell, I saw the muffled figure of one who, on withdrawing the fold of her sagum, which had concealed her features, stood revealed before my astonished eyes. By a faint beam of moonlight I recognised the smiling countenance of Hethra. In response to my exclamation of astonished delight, she said :

' Have I not, then, redeemed my promise to follow you to the end of the world ?'

When I inquired how she came to be in this distant land of Albion, she gave me this account :

Some time after I had left her native land on my journey for Albion she had fallen into sickness, and the wise men of the tribe had pronounced it to be the effect of Lygian witchcraft, in revenge for the defeat of that tribe. It was necessary, they said, that she should be withdrawn for a time beyond the range of their power. She had, therefore, been carried across the Djur-djur mountains to a healthy

region inhabited by a Brigian tribe whose chief was a kinsman of her father. Here, finding that a certain lady was to set out with an armed escort to visit her kindred in Albion, and her sickness having abated, she pleaded to be allowed to journey thither with the party, to a land which was certainly beyond the range of Lygian malice. On arriving safely at the Tamenian country, she was hospitably entertained in the house of Colban, her father's cousin. Here she first learned my sad plight, and, finding that there was no immediate possibility of rescuing me, she set about giving me what secret supplies she could procure, sending them by the hands of her dwarf attendant, Cobi. Partly through maidenly reserve, and partly because of the danger arising from the critical state of affairs in Tamenia, she shrank for a time from visiting me personally, or from making known to me her presence in Albion. She had come now to announce to me the glad tidings of the prospect of my erelong securing liberty. The tyranny of Malgon had become insupportable to the majority of the tribe, and a revolution appeared to be imminent.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

'IF thou puttest thine hand to a piece of work, be careful to finish it; for thou knowest not but, sooner or later, the ghost of thine unfinished work may rise up to trouble thee.'

Mindful of this saying of a wise man of Accad, I have returned to my cell, no longer as a prisoner, but in order to deposit the last bricks required to complete the work. I lay them here as a thank-offering to the Supreme for the preservation of my life.

The tyrant Malgon has fallen, and there is joy in the nation of the Tamenians. Ariac did not return to his native land; he only went as far as the country of the Morianu, where Madoch, brother of Ardorix, was living in exile. To him Ariac reported the state of affairs in Albion, and the prevailing discontent with the usurper's rule. The winter was spent in making preparations for war, and in sending secret messengers to stir up the Tamenian chiefs. A strong party among the Tamenians promised to support Madoch in this enterprise, wherefore, at the

beginning of spring, the exiled chieftain assembled a host of friends and adventurers on the Morian coast, and, collecting a small fleet of corracks, he took advantage of a southerly wind to cross over to Albion. The nation of Tamenia was in a ferment, being divided into two factions, each of which, with very different feelings, anxiously anticipated the coming of the invaders. Driven from his course by a sudden tempest, Madoch and his followers landed in the territory of the Venedu, and were welcomed by that people, who are ancient rivals of the Tamenians. After tarrying here for a time, and receiving a considerable accession to his force, Madoch crossed into the Tamenian country, where Malgon awaited him with a well-armed host, which he posted on a strongly-fortified hill. As the invading chief slowly advanced, numerous bands of malcontents joined him and helped to swell his force.

Such was the posture of affairs on the morning of the fourth day of the month Airu, when I was, as usual, alone in my prison-house. I could see that my keeper's hut was deserted, and an unusual stillness prevailed in the neighbourhood. I was very hungry, for my gaoler had brought me no food on the previous day, and the stock of provisions lately brought me by my nocturnal visitor was already exhausted. Knowing that a crisis in my own affairs, as well as those of Tamenia, was imminent, I was eager to be free and to be able to see for myself what course events were taking; but I well knew that, by my own unassisted efforts, I was totally unable to break the wall of my prison and escape.

Whilst gazing disconsolately from the loophole of my cell, I saw three figures furtively descending through the brushwood that clothed the opposite side of the ravine. One of them I recognised as the dwarf attendant of Hethra, who had so often in the past weeks acted as her nocturnal messenger to me; the two others were savage-looking hinds dressed in sheep-skins. Curious to know with what purpose they had come, I watched them cross the stream and approach my prison, when, first of all, I eagerly inquired of Cobi what tidings he brought, and how it fared with his mistress.

He informed me that Malgon and his armed followers were all absent, that Dinasko was well-nigh deserted, and that the two hostile armies were now face to face at a fortified hill some twenty miles eastward, where a battle was likely to take place that day or the next. As for Hethra, he told me she had been carried off, along with some other women, to the camp of Malgon, and she had sent him back for the purpose of, if possible, effecting my deliverance.

My three visitors now set about the work of breaking the wall of my prison; the two serfs, who were Morian captives enslaved by the Tamenians, were powerful fellows who, by means of wooden crow-bars, succeeded in displacing one of the Cyclopean stones which walled in my cell, and thus made an opening sufficient to allow me to escape. Speedily, and with great goodwill, I left Dinasko behind me, and, guided by Cobi, made my way in the direction of the camp of Madoch. Late in the afternoon we

came in sight of the conical hill on which the host of Malgon was posted, and which was bristling like the back of a boar with the spears of his followers. No battle had as yet taken place, and I learnt that Malgon and his army, trusting in the apparently impregnable character of their position, were confident and boastful.

These barbarians are a race of hunters, trained from infancy to chase and entrap the wild animals which abound in their dense forests and mountains; and, as I was to learn to my cost by an unfortunate experience, they imitate in warfare the vigilant stealth of hunting animals, concealing themselves and watching the movements of an enemy by crouching in thickets, or lying for hours almost totally immersed in the waters of a stream or marsh. On our way my attendant and I were impeded by a marsh, and, having to make a détour somewhat in the direction of Malgon's camp, we fell into an ambuscade, and were seized upon by scouts, who carried us into the presence of the chief.

Malgon and his captains were seated in the midst of an entrenchment formed by a stone wall and a ditch surrounding the summit of the fort; their spears, stuck in the ground, stood upright by their side, and in front of them were rows of planks, with wooden trenchers and drinking-cups of rude pottery, in evident preparation for a feast. An altar, with a victim half consumed, stood in the midst of the camp, where a choir of Druids chanted a fierce hymn to the god of battles. A great horde of warriors, many of them the tallest men I have seen,

armed mostly with weapons of polished flint, manned the ramparts, and swarmed like bees upon the hill-side, bringing in messages from all sides, and keeping alert watch over every movement of the enemy. A little behind the seats of the chiefs was a great booth, covered with an awning of skins, whence women passed in and out, busy in preparations for the feast, and where, though I could not see into the interior, I had reason to believe that Hethra was that moment detained.

Malgon, very imposing in his barbaric array, stood up, full of astonishment, as I was led into his presence. I noted, what was not new to me on the faces of uncivilized people on first observing my foreign aspect, that his manner betokened superstitious dread, as if I were an object of ill-omen appearing before him at that juncture. He was enraged at learning that I had escaped from my prison, and had been caught trying to make my way to the enemy's camp. My doom was speedily pronounced by him.

'You have done us a timely service,' said he to my captors; 'our preparations for the morrow's battle are all complete, save that we lack a human victim to propitiate the god of battles. Bind him,' said he to some of his attendants; 'let him be laid upon the altar of sacrifice, and offered with all due observances to the war-god Camulus.'

I was accordingly bound with thongs and laid upon the altar, which was a long, flat, oblong slab of stone. As I lay upon my back, with hands pinioned to my sides and feet bound closely to-

gether, and whilst Druids gesticulated around me, brandishing their stone knives, still gory with the blood of animal victims, a discussion arose as to the proper method and time of my execution. The oldest of the Druids proclaimed that the mode most acceptable to the god of battles was that I should first be despatched with knives and my body burnt with fire, and the most fitting time was exactly at the hour of midnight. The stone on which I lay was pointed directly north and south; and as at that season of the year the star Regulus stands directly southwards about the hour of midnight, the Druids, who, in a rude way, study the position of the stars, but more especially of the rising sun, pointed out to me the said star, and, by way of adding suspense to the horror of my situation, informed me that whenever it advanced to a position in the heavens where I could see it in a line with a pole set up at my feet, it would announce the midnight hour and give the signal for my doom.

I had at first been too much stupefied by the suddenness of my capture and my changed circumstances to take in the full horror of my position; but, as I lay looking upward at the well-known constellations, and noted the silent sure progress of that star of my doom, a dull sense of despair benumbed my senses. I would have cried to the three rulers of the celestial vault—Anu, Ea, and Bel—whom my countrymen worshipped, but my faith in their supremacy had passed away. I cried to Jehovah instead, to the supreme El worshipped by my early fathers, and He enabled me at least to

maintain calmness of spirit in those terrible moments. The thought of my unfinished task, of my frustrated life-purpose, grieved me; but chiefly I lamented not being able to speak some words with Hethra before I suffered death. Once or twice her name escaped my lips, but softly, for I was afraid of any way involving her in my own miserable plight. Meanwhile the feast was in progress, and the sound of revelry waxed louder; for this people, like their Alpian kindred, are addicted to extravagance in eating and drinking. I had little leisure, from thoughts of my own fate, to attend to the sounds of the camp—the occasional chorus of male voices chanting some wild war-song, the clang of spear and shield from watchers on the ramparts, and the baying of dogs; but, above all, the nearer sounds of revelry, the harsh voices whose barbaric tones abounded with deep guttural notes and rolling *r's*, which reminded me, in their depth and the fierce rapidity of their utterance, of the booming, swishing, and whirring of mill-wheels. I was intently watching the steady inevitable progress of that star which fascinated me with dread as it now approached the zenith of its course.

The hour of midnight was drawing near. At times my attention was momentarily recalled from the horror of my position by shouts as of altercation and quarrelling, which would anon subside and be followed by a momentary lull, only to break out with greater violence than before. All other impressions, however, were destined to vanish before the one appalling fact that now stared me in the face. I was aware that the hour of my doom had come:

the fatal signal hung before me in the heavens—the star Regulus stood exactly over the point of the pole. A mist came over my vision as I looked round, expecting every moment to see the knife of my executioner brandished over me. I had bidden farewell to earth and the sweet joys of life, and had fallen into a trance-like stupor which seemed to last an age, from which recovering a little, I became gradually aware that the spot was strangely still and deserted. No Druid priest was visible in my neighbourhood, and the sound of rushing footsteps from different parts of the camp apprized me that a multitude was assembling around one spot where menacing and angry voices mingled like the clangour of waves in a rising storm.

Whilst waiting thus, a shadowy figure flitted through the darkness of the camp and stood by my side, whispering my name in a soft voice, which thrilled me as I recognised it. It was like the voice of Hormenthis, the angel of the new-born day and the resurrection, calling back across the threshold of death and the tomb one who has already passed into the silent realm of the dead. It was my good angel Hethra, who was already beginning to cut with a bronze knife the thongs which bound me to the altar.

'Is it indeed thyself, O Hethra, pearl of womankind!' I exclaimed, grasping her hand to assure myself of her actual presence as soon as I found my right hand free. 'My last desire is granted; I only wished to see thee once more before I died.'

'Yea, I heard thee utter my name,' she replied,

'and I was determined to stand by thee at the last moment; but now let us hope thy last hour is still far hence, and that this danger is over.'

When she had undone my bonds, she led me apart to the rear of the women's quarters, my limbs, which were rigid and almost powerless, hardly sufficing to support me thither. Here she made me lie down, and cast over me a large fur mantle.

'Tell me,' I whispered eagerly, 'what is going forward in the camp? Is it a night attack on the part of Madoch's host?'

'Nay,' said she, 'our deliverance has come from another quarter—*our* deliverance, for I, too, was in great danger to-night. There has been quarrelling among the chiefs, and the tyrant Malgon is dead. I knew,' said she, 'that great dissatisfaction prevailed even among Malgon's friends and immediate attendants, and that a large party was inclined to the side of Madoch. Malgon was suspicious of the loyalty of the chief Verboduus; high words passed between the two to-night over their cups, and Malgon stabbed Verboduus to the heart with a dagger. A hundred knives leapt from their sheaths, and Carbreth, brother of the murdered chief, avenged his brother by transfixing Malgon with a spear. All was for a moment consternation and confusion, yet no hand was raised to avenge the fallen tyrant. The host is now consulting what to do, and probably, so soon as the day dawns, a message will be sent to Madoch that all the chiefs are ready to give in their submission. My only fear for thee,' she added, 'is on the part of the Druids, that they may still demand thy

death on the ground of thy being already doomed and devoted as a victim to the war-god.'

Happily, those fears were unrealized. The Druids had indeed forgotten me, or had voluntarily abandoned their purpose, and on the following day, whilst Madoch celebrated his bloodless victory and offered sacrifices to his gods, a steer was substituted for me to propitiate Camulus. Madoch took peaceable possession of the royal power, and there was great joy in Tamenia. For my own part, I was received with honour by Madoch, partly because of the cruelties I had suffered at the hand of Malgon, and partly through my friendship with Ariac, who stood high in favour with the new ruler. When Madoch was informed of the object of my visit to Albion he showed hearty and intelligent sympathy with it, and granted me full permission and facility for commencing mining operations in the tin region of his country.

But just before setting out, in company of Ariac, to prospect that region and fix upon the spot which, from its metallic riches and vicinity to some convenient harbour, should seem best adapted to my purpose, a glad surprise befell me in the arrival of some messengers from the sea-coast telling of the advent of two strange ships with dark-faced foreigners on board. The messengers brought with them chips of wood bearing rudely carved drawings representing these ships, and putting it out of all doubt to my mind that these were indeed the Phœnician vessels I was so anxiously expecting.

APPENDIX.

Note A, p. 17.—Merodach-Baladan.

This is not the Merodach-Baladan of Babylon who was the contemporary of Hezekiah, King of Judah, but a much earlier monarch of that name, whose date has been assigned by Sayce to about B.C. 1325 ('Ancient Empires of the East,' p. 298 ; *cf.* Budge, 'Babylonian Life and History,' p. 45).

Note B, p. 18.—Mines of Kasdur.

The Accadian word *kasduru* was probably the source of the Assyrian *kāsazatirra*, and, through it, of the Greek κασσιτερος, whence Cassiterides. For the history of early civilization few articles of commerce are of such importance as tin, owing to its employment in the manufacture of bronze. Copper, the other factor in the production of bronze, was plentifully distributed in the early world, but tin had to be imported with difficulty from different regions. It was one of the most coveted articles of commerce, leading to voyages of exploration to remote lands on the part of traders. The centre of the primeval bronze was probably the Sumero-Accadian people, who probably obtained tin at first from Parapomisus, on the borders of India and Persia, and, as recent discoveries suggest, from the Sinaitic peninsula. But from a period perhaps as early as B.C. 1400 the Oriental peoples had begun to depend for their supplies of tin on Western Europe. The term Cassiterides was originally vague, and was probably at first applied to all the Western tin-producing regions in general. The recent discovery at Monte Valerio, in Tuscany, of ancient mines, in which tin-ore seems to have been the object of research, throws new light on the subject of the early supply of tin from Western Europe. From still more recent information we learn that at one part of the Iberian tin zone, which extends from Corunna round the Portu-

guese frontier and past Salamanca, there are traces near the latter town of very ancient and extensive shafts and workings, whose high antiquity is attested by the character of the ancient tools found in them.

But in early times, as well as modern, the Spanish tin-mines must have been difficult to work, from the prevalent scarcity of water ; and it must have been difficult to convey the mineral to ships, on account of the distance of the best tin districts from the sea-board. Therefore, when the Cornish tin-mines were discovered, within easy reach of the sea, in a country abounding with water, the Iberian tin-mines must have been gradually abandoned for the latter, which would acquire and retain exclusively the appellation of Cassiterides.

Note C, p. 26.—*Aristocratic Librarians.*

The office of librarian was held in high honour among the ancient Babylonians. One of the earliest librarians of whom we know calls himself 'the son of the king' (Sayce, 'Social Life among the Babylonians,' p. 41).

Note D, p. 28.—*Religion and Morality among the Babylonians.*

Herodotus (see Book A, 181, ed. H. Stern, Berlin, 1869), in his account of the Temple of Belus at Babylon, specifies this circumstance ; and that the same admixture of morally corrupt elements in the national religion of Babylon had place at a much earlier period we are prepared to believe, from the great antiquity of the corrupt rites connected with that worship of Adonis and Astarte in Syria which, with certain modifications, is ultimately traceable to the banks of the Lower Euphrates.

The problem of the superiority of the Hebrew religion over that of their civilized neighbours is not to be disposed of on the mere supposition of a monotheistic bias in the genius of the Hebrew branch of the Semitic race, the other branches of which show no such bias ; for a still greater difficulty is involved in the rise and maintenance, in opposition to continuous external forces and internal tendencies to moral corruption, of a religion of such severe moral purity as that of Israel, which was planted in the very midst of a kindred population, whose religion abounded in practices which made it the moral corruptress of the surrounding world.

Note D, p.* 31.—*The Gambulites.*

The country of Gambul, near the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris, was in part inhabited by a barbarian population, who lived on the produce of fishing and hunting. They inhabited a region of sandy islands, covered with aquatic plants,

set in a sea of mud, and they built their huts of matted reeds upon wooded hillocks. 'They go from village to village upon flat-bottomed boats, which they manage with poles. They have hidden dens, where, in case of war, they and their families can take refuge. To reach them it becomes necessary to enter one of the narrow canals, bordered with thickets, each perhaps containing an ambush; to cross the moving bogs, where horses and pedestrians risk being engulfed; and to brave the poisonous fevers which rise from the stagnant waters' (Maspéro, 'Ancient Egypt and Assyria,' London, 1892, p. 338).

Note E, p. 32.—Dilmon.

Oppert and Rawlinson fix the site of the famous island of Dilmon, or Dilmun, at Tylos, the largest of the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf. Delitsch supposes that the ancient island of Dilmon has disappeared.

Note F, p. 37.—Thank-offering Tablets.

'As late as the time of Darius, we find a Babylonian copying out a portion of the Epic of Creation, and depositing it in the library' (of Borsippa), 'for the preservation of his life and the life of all his house' (Sayce, 'Social Life,' p. 40).

Note G, p. 40.—Abilbel.

For a parallel, to some extent, to the state of mind of the hermit Abilbel, see an account given by T. G. Pinches of a very ancient Babylonian text in the Appendix to the English edition (Williams and Norgate, 1885) of Schrader's 'Cuneiform Inscriptions,' vol. ii., p. 313.

Note H, p. 41.—Urusalim.

That Urusalim, 'the city of peace,' existed at a very early period, and had a priest-king, is confirmed by the testimony of the Tell el-Amarna tablets; but the question which has given ground for much recent discussion, as to whether the expression used by King Arad-khiba of Urusalim to his Egyptian suzerain —'Neither my father nor my mother set me in this place . . . the arm of the mighty king caused me to enter in the house of my father'—is to be interpreted as furnishing a real parallel to the Apostolic account of Melchizedek, is more than doubtful. On the other hand, we have Hebrew testimony to show that a shrine of El-elion existed at Jerusalem in the early Canaanite period.

Note I, p. 75.—Mines of Maganna.

The evidence which goes to identify the metalliferous district of Maganna, or Magan, with the Sinaitic peninsula is given by Professor Sayce in the preface to Maspéro's 'Dawn of Civilization,' p. v.

Note K, p. 84.—Fugitive Canaanites.

For Jewish traditions of settlements on the western shores of the Mediterranean by Canaanite colonists expelled from Palestine by Joshua, see Movers, 'Das Phœnische Alterthum,' ii. 427.

Note L, p. 85.—Accadian Penitential Psalms.

The quotation in the text is a highly favourable specimen of one of the early Babylonian penitential psalms, which very rarely rise to a moral elevation in the least comparable to that of the Hebrew psalms.

Note M, p. 106.—Early Connection between Babylonia and Phœnicia.

It was very natural that Merodach-Baladan, in his letter, should make reference to this. Besides the traditional derivation of the first seafaring settlers in Phœnicia from the shores of the Persian Gulf, there was much intercourse between Babylon and Phœnicia from the remotest historic period. Sargon of Agadé (3730 ?) carried his conquests through Western Syria, and according to an Accadian inscription found at Tell Loh, and dating about B.C. 2500 (Palestine Exploration Fund *Quarterly Statement*, April, 1891), it is said: 'When Gudea (King of Accad) was building the temple of his god Ningirsu, that god subjected to him all things between the Upper Sea and the Lower Sea' (the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, thinks Conder). 'In Amanus, the mountain of cedar, he has cut and caused to be brought from the mountain cedar-trees whose length was 70 cubits, cedars whose length was 50 cubits, and box-trees whose length was 25 cubits. With this wood he made various parts of the temple.'

Kudur-Mabuk (*circa* B.C. 2000) styled himself 'father of Martu, the land of the setting sun,' the Accadian equivalent of the Semitic Akharru, which was the Babylonian designation of Phœnicia, or of Western Syria in general. Some scholars, however, now read for the monumental Akharru, or 'western land,' Amurri, which would perhaps cast light on the origin of the word Amorite.

The early relation between Phœnicia and Babylonia was thus probably somewhat analogous to the original connection between Carthage and Tyre, North America and England, except that the colonists in the two latter cases more speedily acquired absolute independence of the mother states.

Note N, p. 156.—Names of Primitive Swiss Tribes.

We know from Roman writers that the Celtic tribes who, in the earliest historical times, inhabited the part of the Alpine

country which was traversed by Simran, were the Seduni, Veragri, and Nantuates ; but what appear to be the names of a much earlier population in that district are found in the following curious passage from Avienus, a comparatively late writer, who, however, is said to have founded it upon 'the secret annals of Carthage':

> 'Meat amnis (Rhodanus) autem fonte per Tylangios,
> Per Daliternos, per Chabilcorum sata,
> Temenicum et agrum. . . .
> Panditur porro in decem
> Passus recursus gurgitum stagnum grave.
> Plerique tradunt, inserit semet dehinc
> Vastam in paludem, quem vetus mos Græciæ
> Vocavit Accron.
>
> *Ora Maritima*, ii. 666, *et seq.*

The Accron here mentioned must be the Lake of Geneva.

Zeuss ('Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme') regards those tribal names as distinctly German, and as the earliest Germanic names on record. He supposes that the tribes here mentioned were subsequently dispossessed by Celtic invaders of the Alpine region. But, apart from the fact that one of the tribes, the Tylangii or Tulingi, is mentioned by Cæsar among the Celtic populations in the Helvetian Confederacy, it is very doubtful if the distinction of Celts and Germans, so far as that part of Europe is concerned, had place at the period of Simran's journey. There is evidence from comparative philology that the Aryan-speaking Celts spoke, at that early period, a language distinguishable from the Italic idioms only by difference of dialect ; and how far the Celtic speech may at that period have differed from the German is a question whose answer depends on our view of the early ethnological relation of Germans to Celts. If, as we suppose, the peculiarly Aryan element of the European population was a conquering race from the North or North-east, who came Southward in successive waves of invasion, subjugating the earlier races, and forming the free and dominant element in the new population, then the yellow-haired, blonde German would only differ from the yellow-haired, blonde Celt in having appeared more recently on the Central European arena, and in being less mixed with the alien and more Southern populations, less modified by new climatic conditions, and having his language less influenced by daily contact with subject populations of a different speech. And if, even within the historic period, the further back we go we find the limits of the Germanic territory receding ever further Northward, till about B.C. 300 it is probable that no Germanic tribes inhabited the country south of the Main, it is very doubtful if any people who can be distinctively styled Germanic existed anywhere in Central Europe in B.C. 1400 to 1300.

Note O, p. 164.—*Primitive European Midsummer Fête.*

The midsummer festival, which used to be celebrated in almost every district in Europe on St. John's Eve, dates back undoubtedly to ancient Aryan times. Nork ('Etymologisch-symbolisch-mythologisches Wörterbuch,' article on Midsummer Night Fête) gives many comparative details as to the celebration of the festival in different European countries. See also Grimm's 'Deutsche Mythologie.' The Romish Church did little more than substitute Christian formulæ for heathen in the liturgical services connected with this festival. For a description of this fête as formerly celebrated in England, see Besant's 'Dorothy Foster'; and for its mode of celebration in Brittany, see Souvestre's 'Derniers Bretons.' The great antiquity of this heathen festival is attested by the deep-rooted hold it has had on the mind of the lower classes even in certain Protestant districts. In Switzerland the primitive forms are still retained with peculiar tenacity even in the very district where Simran witnessed its heathen celebration. There are fires called *brandons* kindled in the evening, and around these the people dance, and, at least until lately, they leap through the flames and pass their children and cattle through the fire—a practice deeply rooted in the religious beliefs of early Europe, which was followed by the peasantry of primitive Latium in their celebration of the festival of Palilia, and which is not yet quite extinct in some parts of the British Islands. During the night of Midsummer Eve the younger Swiss peasants ascend to the summit of a neighbouring mountain to see the sun rising; then they descend to a still lofty *alpage*, where milk is freely supplied to the poor, and where a religious service is held by the pastor; then, in the afternoon, they adjourn to a village lower down the mountain, and end the day in dancing. Such is still the mode of celebrating the *Berneuse*, or *fête de Mi-ete*, on the Tour d'Ai, a remarkable peak overlooking the eastern end of the Lake of Geneva. Many writers (*e.g.*, Nillson, 'Early Inhabitants of the Scandinavian North') regard this festival as adopted by the early European from Phœnician Baal-worship. Nillson identifies the Scandinavian Baldur with Adonis, and the Celtic deity Belin has been identified with the Phœnician Baal, of whose worship the May Day fire of *Bealltainn* is supposed to be a relic; but these views have not yet been established on any satisfactory scientific basis.

Note P, p. 173.—*Flax and Wheat cultivated by the Lake-dwellers.*

'The lake-dwellers of Switzerland had the same cereals as the Egyptians. A kind of wheat which is still very commonly cultivated in Egypt, and yet is found in very ancient mummy-

cases, came, at least occasionally, into lacustrine Switzerland' Professor Heer, quoted by Keller, 'Lake-dwellings of Switzerland,' vol. i., p. 525; London, 1878).

This fact, taken along with Tacitus's mention of the worship of a goddess Isis by the Suevi ('Germania' ix.), might suggest some primitive basis of reality for the mythological tradition cited by Jean le Maire, A.D. 1512, who says: 'La deesse *Isis*, royne d'Ægypte, vient en Allemaigne et montra au rude peuple l'usaige de mouldre la farine et faire du pain' (*vide* Latham's 'Germania' of Tacitus, 1851, p. 53). It is an important fact that those cultivated plants which were most essential to the Semites and Egyptians, such as barley, wheat, millet, flax, beans, onions, also recur among the lacustrine people of Europe; whilst those which are absent in the one case, such as rye, oats, and hemp, are missing in the other also (Schrader, 'Prehistoric Antiquities,' p. 296). But after all that has been done in this department by such distinguished writers as Hehn, Kremer, and De Candolle, the subject of the exact origin and spread of cultivated plants is still to a great extent involved in mystery.

From the original identity of the Greek word for the linen tunic, χιτών, with the Semitic *ketonet*, we know that linen, as an article of commerce, must have been carried to Europe by the Phœnicians. The Etruscans cultivated flax at a very early period, and in Pliny's time linen-weaving was common throughout the whole of Gaul

Note Q, pp. 180, 184.—*Primitive European Customs.*

(1) *Lot-casting by Chips.*—That this method of casting lots, the same as that described by Tacitus in the tenth chapter of his 'Germania,' goes back to a much earlier period is proved by comparative philology. The oak was employed by preference for this purpose because among Celts, Germans, and Slavs that tree was sacred to the supreme deity. The markings carved or written upon the chips were originally hieroglyphic runes, and in this and similar ways the Northern peoples developed a rude form of picture-writing, which was superseded by written characters borrowed from Southern and Eastern peoples. For the relation of this subject to Aryan philology, see Schrader in the work just cited, pp. 279, 280.

(2) *Mead.*—That the early Europeans not only used an intoxicating drink made from honey, but also employed the word 'mead' itself, is attested by Aryan comparative philology: *e.g.*, Lithuanic, *midùs;* Old Irish, *mid;* Old High German, *metu;* Old Slavonic, *medŭ;* Greek, μεθυ, wine, μεθη, drunkenness. 'The meaning "honey," which this series of words may take in numerous languages, and the idea of drunkenness developed

from it, shows that we have here to do with an intoxicating drink of which the essential constituent must have been honey' (O. Schrader, 'Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples,' p. 320; London, 1890).

Note R, p. 202.—Aspect of the Primitive Britons.

This accords with the description given by Strabo, who has perhaps borrowed it from Pytheas, the Massilian navigator, and who says, speaking of the Cassiterides: 'These islands are inhabited by men who wear black clothes. They have long tunics reaching their heels, a girdle about their breast, and a staff in their hand. To see them walk, one might take them for the Furies of the tragedies. They live by their flocks, the most of them in the manner of nomads.'

Note S, p. 205.—The Mistletoe as a Passport to the Underworld.

Compare 'Æneid,' vi. 136:

'Latet arbore opaca
Aureus et foliis et lento vimine ramus,
Junoni infernæ sacer: . . .
Sed non ante datur telluris operta subire,
Auricomos quam qui decerpserit arbore fetus.'

Virgil, who was a great student of Italian antiquities and a native of Cisalpine Gaul, his own name being Celtic in form, evidently borrowed his idea of the miraculous yellow twig, which was to be the key of admission for Æneas to the underworld, from similar mystic virtues ascribed by the Celts to the mistletoe.

Note T, p. 206.—Early Aryan Funeral Hymn.

Along with certain European peculiarities, some analogies are traceable between the verses of the text and those of the Rigveda, x. 14-18 (see Max Müller's text), where the deceased persons and Agni and the Earth-mother are successively apostrophized—*e.g.*:

'Depart; go by the ancient paths which the fathers have followed! Thou shalt see the two kings, the gods Varuna and Yama, who are pleased with libations. . . .

'Burn him not, O Agni! Do him no harm! Rend not his skin or his members! When thou hast thoroughly penetrated him, O thou that knowest all beings, send him to the fathers! . . .

'Go towards the mother! Go towards the Earth, the broad, the immense, the beneficent, who is benign to the pious as a young woman full of tenderness! Let him be kept far from the brink of perdition!

'Open, O Earth! Do him no harm! Receive him with tenderness! Let him be welcome to thee! Envelop him, O Earth, as a mother enswathes her child in her garment!'

Note U, p. 207.

Simran evidently refers here to what are known as *horned cairns*, which appear to have been peculiar to Britain, the original configuration of which seems to bear out the idea of the text. Descriptions of these have been given by Professor Rolleston and Dr. Joseph Anderson ('Pagan Scotland').

Note V.—Some of the Places mentioned by Simran.

Ur, now Mugheir, on the Lower Euphrates. Borsippa, a suburb of Babylon. Dilmon, an island in the Persian Gulf. Akkoz, on the coast of Arabia. Punt, or Puanit, on the Red Sea, near Suakim. Aûnû, or On (Heliopolis), in Egypt. Sidon, Troy, and Argos. Atria, at the mouth of the river Eridan (Po). Dinamion, near Aigle, Switzerland. Trenavia may be the ancient lake-city, twenty acres in extent, which stood at the mouth of the Tamise, near Morges, on the Lake of Geneva. The Tamenians of Albion may or may not have been identical with the later Damnonii of Devonshire.

THE END.

Elliot Stock, 62, *Paternoster Row.*

Dramatis Personae.

Pennant, H. (L.L.D) Prof.
Ms. origin of Early Civilization.

Wyndhurst, F.P. (Esq.)
of Carrisford.
(Sir Bevis de Carrisforde, a feudal Knight
valley of the Wandle (River)
stream (tributary of Wandle) — Leet

Simran, the Babylonian
searching for tin mines in Albion
BC 1325-50. Hyperborean island.
Tin mining duchy - Devonshire

St. Asaph Chapel
St. Asaph Cathedral (Smallest in gt. Br.
in ruins. Flintshire, Wales.

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